

**“Empowering homeless people through employment?:
the experience of British social enterprises and lessons
for Kazakhstan”.**

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ABSTRACT

Homelessness, particularly amongst single people, has become highly topical in major cities in Kazakhstan in recent years, but no national strategies or programmes have been developed to address the issue. However, the Kazakh Government has increasingly been emphasising access to employment as the key means of resolving these growing problems of urban homelessness. At the same time, the concept of 'social enterprise' has been promoted in a 'bottom up' fashion by not-for-profit organisations as a potentially viable means of responding to homelessness in Kazakhstan. Perhaps surprisingly, debates regarding the potential utility of promoting employment and/or social enterprise as solutions to homelessness have occurred in a parallel, and relatively unconnected, fashion.

In a very different context, the UK is internationally recognised as having an especially well developed social enterprise support structure wherein successive Governments have advocated the use of social enterprise as a tool for transforming disadvantaged people's lives, including that of homeless people. This thesis, therefore, seeks to identify potential lessons for Kazakhstan from the UK where there is substantial experience in the use of employment-based social enterprises to address issues of homelessness.

'Empowerment' is often said to be the aim of social enterprises seeking to improve the lives of homeless people and other disadvantaged people. This thesis argues that Amartya Sen's influential 'capability' approach - which focuses on a person's 'substantive freedom' to achieve 'valuable functionings' in key domains of their lives - provides an appropriate means of concretising and operationalising the concept of empowerment in this context. A qualitative methodology was employed in the study, and interviews were conducted with 22 key informant stakeholders from social enterprises across the UK, and detailed case studies undertaken of four social enterprises operating within the UK homelessness sector (11 service providers and 23 (ex-) homeless service users were interviewed in site visits to these four social enterprises).

The key messages to emerge from this study for Kazakhstan are as follows. First, employment-focused social enterprises can facilitate the empowerment of homeless

people in a number of important respects, but a multi-dimensional approach is required to enhance their capabilities in four (independently important) domains, namely: bodily empowerment; political and economic empowerment; social and emotional empowerment; and creative and intellectual empowerment. Second, the critical ingredient in effective empowerment using employment-focused models is the creation of a supportive working environment for homeless people with complex needs: such a supportive environment is far more readily found in social enterprises with a predominantly 'social' rather than 'business' orientation. Third, and contrary to political expectations and the assertions of some proponents of the social enterprise model, homeless people appeared to derive no additional 'empowerment' or other benefit from the employment projects in which they participated being social enterprises rather than traditional charities; in fact, the positive impacts identified were strongly associated with those social enterprises with a 'social' emphasis that closely resembles the traditional ethos of charitable organisations.

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List of Acronyms

| | |
|---------------|--|
| CIC | Community Interest Company |
| CIS | The Commonwealth of Independent States |
| CLG | Company Limited by Guarantee |
| CLS | Company Limited by Shares |
| DTI | Department of Trade and Industry |
| ETHOS | European Typology of Homelessness and Housing Exclusion |
| GDP | Gross Domestic Products |
| IMF | International Monetary Fund |
| ODPM | Office of the Deputy Prime Minister |
| OECD | Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development |
| OIM | Organisational Impression Management |
| OSCE | Organisation for Security and Co-Operation in Europe |
| SE | Social Enterprise |
| SEs | Social Enterprises |
| UK | The United Kingdom |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |
| UNESCO | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation |
| USAID | United States Agency for International Development |

Part One: Context, Theory and Methods

Chapter 1: Introduction

The ‘Research Problem’

Homelessness, particularly amongst single people, has become highly prevalent in major cities in Kazakhstan in recent years. It mostly affects the white population such as Russians, Ukrainians and Belarusians. However, this pattern is beginning to change, with increasing numbers from other ethnic groups such as ethnic Kazakhs, Koreans, Uzbeks and other Asian populations experiencing homelessness. It is widely believed that this has been caused by changes to the traditional support role within family kinship networks brought about by economic development (Gani, 2010).

Despite the increasing prevalence of homelessness in Kazakhstan, no national strategies or programmes have been developed by the Kazakh Government to address the issue. That said, the Kazakh Government has increasingly been emphasising access to employment as one policy response to the growing problems of urban homelessness amongst single people. At the same time, the concept of ‘social enterprise’ (SE) has been promoted in a ‘bottom up’ fashion by not-for-profit organisations as a potentially viable means of responding to the growing homelessness problem in Kazakhstan. Perhaps surprisingly, debates regarding the potential utility of promoting employment and/or SE as solutions to homelessness have occurred in a parallel, and relatively unconnected, fashion.

In a very different context, the United Kingdom (UK) is internationally recognised as having an especially well developed SE support structure wherein successive Governments have advocated the use of SE as an ‘innovative’ and sustainable tool for transforming disadvantaged people’s lives (DTI, 2002; Pearce, 2003; Spear et al., 2009; Teasdale, 2010b; Nicholls, 2010). Under the New Labour UK administrations 1997-2010, SE was formally introduced as a governmental ‘policy vehicle’ (Carmel and Harlock, 2008; Spear et al., 2009). Landmark changes included the establishment of a SE Unit at the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) (DTI, 2002; Pearce, 2003; Teasdale, 2012a), and the introduction of an official definition of social enterprise, this being “A business with primarily social objectives whose surpluses are principally reinvested for that purpose...” (DTI, 2002 p. 8).

Interest in the SE model has further expanded under the current UK Coalition Government elected in 2010. Recent years have witnessed a growing emphasis on concepts of ‘empowerment’ and ‘self-help’, which are particularly linked to this Conservative-led Coalition Government’s notion of the ‘Big Society’ (Pattie and Johnston, 2011; Teasdale et al., 2012). Within the Conservatives’ ‘Big Society’ rhetoric, ‘empowerment’ means people being self-reliant rather than being dependent on the state. Thus, the term ‘empowerment’ in this context is mainly conceptualised as disadvantaged people taking more responsibility for themselves (Kisby, 2010; Settle, 2010).

This favourable political context over the past decade or longer in the UK has facilitated an increase in the number of SEs in the homelessness sector. In particular, there has been an emphasis on supporting and encouraging SEs with a specific focus on employment which facilitates the integration of homeless people into vocational activities and the paid workforce (Teasdale, 2010a, 2012a). The ‘SPARK’ programme is a pertinent example, given that it had an initial government investment of £2.94m, in 2007, and was focused specifically on the ‘investing’ of employment-based initiatives among homelessness SEs which prioritise training, work experience and employment for homeless people in their project objectives (SPARK, 2009; Teasdale, 2012a).

In comparison to Kazakhstan, then, the UK is considerably ‘further ahead’ with regard to the development of SEs with an employment focus as a response to homelessness. Given the high levels of interest in the promotion of employment and/or SE within Kazakhstan, it is highly likely that lessons may be learned from the experience of UK practitioners, policy makers, and indeed homeless people themselves. This thesis, therefore, seeks to integrate currently parallel and disconnected debates around SE and employment in the homelessness field in Kazakhstan, and identify potential lessons from the UK where there is substantial experience in this field. It does so by exploring whether, and if so how, SEs with an employment focus ‘empower’ homeless people by enhancing their capabilities. In order to do so, a conceptual framework has been developed to operationalise the key concepts employed in this thesis.

Towards a Conceptual Framework

This thesis argues that the ‘capabilities’ framework proposed by Amartya Sen (1992), and further developed by Martha Nussbaum (2000), helpfully provides a means of operationalising the concept of ‘empowerment’, which is often said to be the aim of SEs seeking to improve the lives of disadvantaged people. In essence, ‘capabilities’ represent “...a person’s freedom to lead one type of life or another” (Sen, 1992, p. 40). In other words, the capabilities approach focuses on the real opportunities we have to accomplish what we value. Sen (1992) terms these accomplishments ‘valuable functionings’. Sen’s (1992) particular interest is in promoting equality in the space of capabilities. For him, the focus of empowerment should be centred on enhancing capabilities. Sen (1992) calls on us to bear in mind the context and diversity of human complexities in the conceptualisation of empowerment. Furthermore, the capabilities approach captures ends and means, thus ensuring that people are capable of attaining a ‘well-lived’ life (Nussbaum and Sen, 1993).

Nussbaum (2000) takes Sen’s work a stage further and clarifies an operational list of 10 central human capabilities and key domains of life. These domains cover matters such as: personal security; ability to meet basic needs which include health, shelter and food; capacity to flourish in terms of play; learning and creativity, inner development; and ability to express care and concern for natural environment and animals; having a meaningful positive social relationship with other people on the basis of equal dignity and self-respect; ability to participate in the political process to influence the decision-making process in those areas that concerns one’s life; ability to work; and capacity to plan and to conceive one’s own conception of a good life. Crucially, Nussbaum (2000, p.221) makes it clear that “...we cannot satisfy the need for one of them (these domains) by giving a larger amount of another one”. In other words, she points out that the empowerment process is multi-dimensional and should be pursued through enhancing individuals’ capabilities in all of these dimensions; that is, one cannot be prioritised over another.

Drawing upon the work of Sen and Nussbaum, this thesis has developed a conceptual framework which underpinned the study. This conceptual framework was employed, together with a qualitative methodology involving interviews with key informant

stakeholder interviews and detailed case studies of SEs operating within the UK homelessness sector, to fulfil the following research aims and objectives.

Research Aims and Objectives

The overall aim of this thesis is to consider whether, and if so how, *employment-based social enterprises empower* homeless people by enhancing their *capabilities*.

This is underpinned by a number of specific research objectives, as follows:

- How is the concept of *social enterprise* defined and operationalised in the UK homelessness sector?
- To what extent is the concept of *self-help* embedded in UK social enterprise models in this field?
- How, if at all, is the concept of *empowerment* understood by those operating social enterprises in this field in the UK?
- How *effective* are *employment-centred* social enterprise models in empowering homeless people via enhancing their capabilities?
- Does its being a *social enterprise* (rather than a traditional charity and/or commercial enterprise) *make a difference* to the experiences and/or perspectives of its service users?
- What if any models and approaches would be most appropriate and effective in the Kazakh context?

Structure of the Thesis

The thesis is structured in four parts: The remainder of *Part One* provides the policy, conceptual and methodological framework for the thesis. Specifically, Chapter 2 introduces the key policy-relevant concepts which are interrogated in the thesis, most notably ‘social enterprise’ and ‘homelessness’ as employed in the UK. The chapter also outlines the recent development of specific employment-focused SEs in the homelessness sector in the UK. The purpose of Chapter 3 is to develop the conceptual framework for the thesis. In so doing, this chapter engages with the key theoretical concepts of ‘empowerment’, ‘self-help’ and ‘capabilities’. Chapter 4 then describes the

methodological approach taken in the thesis, explaining in particular why a qualitative research design was adopted. It also provides a detailed account of the case studies which included in-depth interviews with both service providers and homeless people.

Part Two of the thesis presents the central research findings from the UK fieldwork. Chapter 5 presents the service providers' points of view and the findings relating to their conceptualisation and operationalisation of key concepts including social enterprise, empowerment, and self-help. This chapter also discusses service providers' perceptions of how and to what extent employment-focussed SEs may empower homeless people via the promotion of their capabilities. Chapter 6 switches the focus to the perspectives of homeless people, exploring their understandings of the key terms empowerment and self-help. This chapter also evaluates whether, and if so in what ways, SEs have empowered homeless people by enhancing their capabilities. Homeless people's views are then compared and contrasted with service providers' views.

Part Three of the thesis focuses on the lessons for Kazakhstan that might be drawn from this UK research. By way of providing contextual background, Chapter 7 describes the social, political and welfare structures, together with the scale and nature of the homelessness problem in Kazakhstan. The penultimate chapter, Chapter 8, then highlights the key potential lessons for Kazakhstan that might be identified via the lens of the capabilities conceptual framework, taking into account key lessons from policy transfer literature.

Part Four of the thesis, consisting of Chapter 9, presents the overall findings and conclusions of the thesis, most notably the potential lessons for Kazakhstan.

Chapter 2: Social Enterprise and Homelessness in the UK

Introduction

Chapter 2 outlines the policy context for SE and homelessness in the UK and introduces these as the key policy-relevant concepts interrogated in the thesis. It begins by discussing the political context for SE development under the UK New Labour government 1997-2010 and the Coalition Government elected in 2010. It then introduces various definitional debates on the key concept of SE, and arrives at a definition of SE that is employed by this study. This chapter also considers the meaning of homelessness in order to arrive at the definition used in the current thesis, and provides a brief overview of homelessness policy in the UK. It then outlines the recent development of employment-focused SEs in the homelessness sector in the UK.

The Political Context for Social Enterprise under New Labour 1997-2010 and the 2010 Coalition Government in the UK

The UK is internationally recognised as having an especially developed SE support structure (Nicholls, 2010), wherein successive Governments have advocated SE as an ‘innovative’ and sustainable tool for transforming disadvantaged people’s lives (DTI, 2002; Pearce, 2003; Spear et al., 2009; Teasdale, 2010b). Under the New Labour UK administration 1997-2010, SE was formally introduced as a government ‘policy vehicle’ (Carmel and Harlock, 2008; Spear et al., 2009). This SE promotion was closely associated with various policy initiatives of the ‘Third Way’ (Giddens, 1998) launched by the New Labour administration, which involved “...urban regeneration, civil society and developing mixed economies of welfare” (McCabe and Hahn, 2006, p. 393).

Landmark changes included the establishment of a SE Unit at the DTI (DTI, 2002; Pearce, 2003; Teasdale, 2012b) and the subsequent introduction of the SE strategy (DTI, 2002). As Haugh and Kitson, (2007, p. 495) argue “this reflected the emergence of non-profit organisations, which were rejecting grant dependency in favour of pursuing financial independence through trading”. The New Labour administration adopted the new legal framework of the Community Interest Company (CIC) which was an attempt to ideologically differentiate SEs from traditional charity approaches

and commercial companies, notably through the introduction of an 'asset lock' (see further below) (Social Enterprise Coalition, 2009; Teasdale, 2012b).

Interest in the SE model has further expanded under the current UK Coalition Government, however the dynamic of the discussion has shifted and is now allied with the idea of the 'Big Society' (Kisby, 2010; Pattie and Johnston, 2011; Teasdale et al., 2012). The 'Big Society' is said to be "...a restructuring of the relationship between state and society, with a substantial movement of power and responsibility from the former to the latter" (Pattie and Johnston, 2011, p. 403). The Conservative party leader David Cameron has argued that 'the great ignored' should take on the powers of 'Big Government' through entrepreneurial initiatives, including via the development of social enterprises. He believes that, in this way, the government will 'actively help' people to take control of their lives (Freedland, 2010; Kisby, 2010; Rainford and Tinkler, 2010).

Some commentators argue that the Coalition Government encourages citizens "...to do more for themselves: help themselves to get out of the socio-economic problems they face" (Settle, 2010 p. 2). Kisby (2010, p. 487) maintains that it shows that "...primary responsibility for society's problem does not lie with the government rather with the community...". Within the Conservative's 'Big Society' rhetoric, 'empowerment' means people being self-reliant, rather being dependent on the state and in this context is mainly conceptualised as disadvantaged people taking more responsibility for themselves (Kisby, 2010; Pattie and Johnston, 2011).

This favourable political context has enabled an increase in the prevalence of SEs in the UK. Over a five-year period, Government estimates indicate a total growth in the number of SEs in the UK from 5,300 to 62,000. However, these are controversial figures because of the range of definitions of SEs and the methodology used to compile these statistics (Teasdale et al., 2013). The next section examines the definition of SE in more detail.

The Definition of Social Enterprise

There is no universal agreement as to what the term SE means (Bornstein, 2001; Koppell, 2001; Pearce 2003; Vidal, 2005; Austin et al., 2006; Thomasson, 2009; Billis, 2010; Defourny and Nyssens, 2010; Harding, 2010; Kerlin, 2010; Short et al., 2010; Teasdale, 2010a; Young, 2010; Czischke et al., 2012; Sacranie, 2012; Bacq et al.,

2013). SEs could potentially cover most organisations in the third sector: charities; community foundations; cooperatives; mutual societies; micro-finance organisations and housing associations (Harding, 2010; Mullins and Pawson, 2010). There are three ‘lenses’ through which we can consider the definition of SE: first, the ‘official definition’ and legal identification specifically in the UK context; second, broad ideological viewpoints such as the ‘social innovation school’, which puts forward the role of individual entrepreneurs’ as ‘innovators’, and the ‘social enterprise school’, which focuses more on the role of organisations; and third, what might be termed as ‘organisational impression management’ (OIM). Each of these lenses is discussed in turn below.

The ‘Official Definition’

The UK New Labour Administration 1997-2010 defined SE as “...a business with primarily social objectives whose surpluses are principally reinvested for that purpose..., rather than being driven by the need to maximise profit for shareholders and owners” (DTI, 2002 p. 8). The government encouraged SEs “...to move away from grant dependency and toward self-financing” (DTI 2002, p. 66). As mentioned above, this ‘official definition’ was supported by a CIC law that represented an attempt to ideologically distinguish the role of SEs from charitable bodies (Social Enterprise Coalition, 2009; Teasdale, 2012b). CIC law introduced an ‘asset lock’ which distinguishes SEs also from commercial entities. The asset lock is a general term used to cover all the provisions designed “to ensure that the assets of the CIC are used for the benefit of the community” (CIC, 2006, p. 2). The main principle of asset lock is that it prohibits CICs from distributing their assets (or profits) to their members and if a SE went bankrupt the assets would be used for the benefit of the local community (Snaith, 2007; Malik, 2008).

However, aside from CICs, there are several other legal forms that a SE can take:

- Charities
- Industrial and Provident Societies
- Company Limited by Guarantee (CLG)
- Company limited by Shares (CLS) (Malik, 2008).

Ideological Viewpoints: ‘Social Innovation School’ and ‘Social Enterprise School’

The section above focussed on the official and legal definition of SE in the UK context. We now turn to broad theoretical discussions of the concept, specifically the ‘social innovation school’ and ‘SE school’ which underpin wider ideological interpretations and competing political discourses (Teasdale, 2012b).

The ‘social innovation school’ focuses on *individual social entrepreneurs* as ‘innovators’, leaders and ‘change-makers’ in their field (Johnson, 2000; Drayton, 2002; Mair and Marti, 2006; Sharir and Lerner, 2006; Stevens et al., 2009). For Dees (1998), a social entrepreneur is similar to a traditional entrepreneur and usually takes advantage of opportunities and mobilises resources in order to do so. This definition is predominantly a management-centred interpretation of social entrepreneurs. In other words, in this conception of SEs, they are entrepreneur citizens who may set up, run and manage an enterprise and do not necessarily come from a disadvantaged social group (Johnson, 2000, 2012). However, Seanor et al. (2007) criticise such an approach, for taking an individualistic and ‘elitist’ approach (Pearce, 2003; Ridley-Duff et al., 2008; Bull, 2008). It is also notable that within the ‘social innovation school’, research is mostly “limited to ‘good practices’ and success stories of social entrepreneurs as ‘change makers’...” (Stevens et al., 2009 p. 4), with ‘failures’ receiving little analytical attention (Amin et al., 2002; Scott and Teasdale, 2012).

The *organisational focus* of the ‘social enterprise school’ stands in contrast to the individualistic orientation of the social innovation school, but has itself contrasting roots in the USA on the one hand, and in continental Europe on the other (Amin et al., 2002; Defourny and Nyssens, 2010; Stevens et al., 2009; Young, 2010). As Bacq and Janssen (2011 cited in Stevens et al., 2009 p. 5) note “the assumptions and historical development of the USA and European schools on SEs are inherently different, based on different conceptions of capitalism and the role of government”. The USA approach pays particular attention to the business aspect of SEs (Bull, 2008; Ridley-Duff et al., 2008; Stevens et al., 2009). Such organisations are broadly classified as ‘SEs with a business orientation’ (Teasdale, 2010b).

Some writers note that the American social enterprise school dates back to a period of government financing shortages in the 1980s (Dees, 1998; Mort et al., 2003; Kerlin, 2006; Stevens et al., 2009). Within this school of thought, trading income is identified

as a key criterion of a SE (Smallbone and Lyon, 2005; Social Enterprise Coalition, 2009). For instance, some researchers assert that SEs differ from charities in that at least 50% of their total income should come from trading activities (Social Enterprise Coalition, 2009; Social Enterprise Mark, 2010). The underpinning idea is that SEs are to be financially independent from grant allocation and income. From this perspective, the DTI's (2002) finance generation dimension of the 'official definition' partly resembles the USA 'social enterprise standpoint' (Stevens et al., 2009; Teasdale, 2012a).

The USA 'social enterprise school' and DTI (2002) business-focussed approach, however, are generalised interpretations of the SE term and fail to explain the implementation of such SE models in specific social policy fields. Significantly, Teasdale (2012a) casts doubt on the commercial capacity of SEs to generate surpluses, giving the example of work-based SEs in the homelessness sector in the UK. He challenges both the official definition of the DTI (2002) and the USA-influenced notion of SE advocating the accumulation of financial resources via power in the marketplace and the achievement of social goals through sustainable profits. For Teasdale (2012a), SEs' income streams are, in fact, hybrid in nature in that they apply a 'cost-transfer' policy accumulating income from different sources, such as private donations and charity support, and to a certain extent trading services and products in the market, but also including state benefits in their business models (see Figure 2.1). He notes that some SEs' "...drew upon housing benefit [of homeless people working there] to supplement trading income" (Teasdale, 2012a, p. 522).

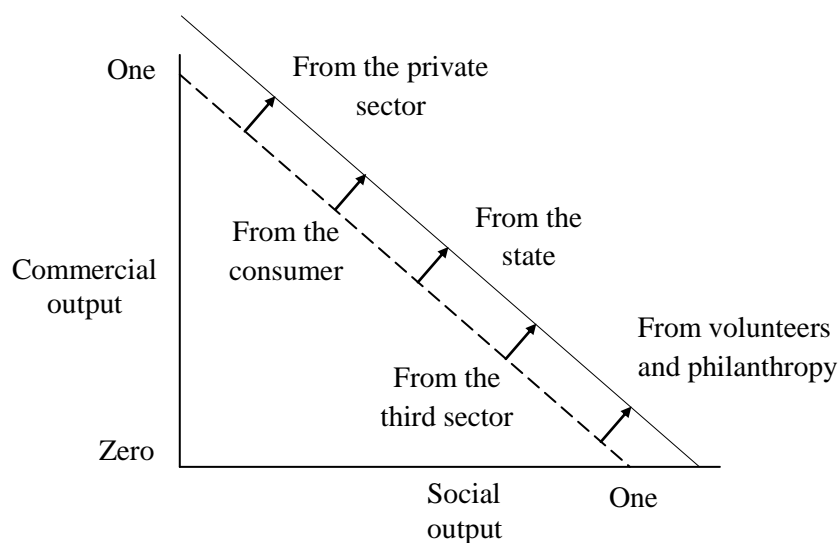


Figure 2.1 Strategies used to balance social and commercial considerations

Source: Teasdale (2012a, p. 525)

In contrast to the US social enterprise school, the European social enterprise school has a more participatory and collective governance orientation and less of a business emphasis (Defourny and Nyssens, 2010; SENSOT, 2010; Teasdale, 2010b), and its emergence is traced back to de-industrialisation and a sharp rise in unemployment in the 1980s across Europe (Kerlin, 2006). This school of thought is linked to those SEs with a more 'social orientation' (Teasdale, 2010b, 2012b). The European perspective on SE is their being associated with organisations with “the explicit aim of benefitting the community, initiated by a group of citizens and in which the material interest of capital investors is subject to limits” (Stevens et al., 2009 p. 6 and also see Nyssens, 2006; Ridley-Duff et al., 2008, 2011).

This European view of SE also contrasts sharply with the ‘social innovation school’, as it conceptualises a SE also as a ‘bottom up’ initiative and these principles are rooted in the parameters of SE such as a community led initiative, ownership and governance (Stevens et al., 2009; also see Nyssens, 2006). However, for Ridley-Duff and Bull (2011) such a participatory-led collaborative governance term is naïve, and in practice SE is not mostly based on user-led and community ownership. This is perhaps true, yet user-led SE examples can be found in the context of the UK where a bottom-up, user-led homelessness SE incubator was set up, albeit with the support of ‘parent’ charity agency (McKenna, 2011).

Organisational Impression Management

However, what all of the above debates overlook is the possibility of rhetorical self-identification of SEs, a move which can be described as OIM (Teasdale, 2010c). OIM is a deliberately developed strategy which is used to create a certain organisational image and perception amongst an external audience in order to accumulate resources from a wider range of stakeholders than would otherwise be the case (Bolino et al., 2008 cited in Teasdale, 2010c). Teasdale (2010c, p. 287) notes that “...organisations positioning themselves as SEs may have access to a wider range of funders than other third sector organisations”. The OIM process is suggested, however, as a two-way process of negotiation where external resource holders are not passive recipients, but rather are also active negotiators in which both sides attempt to make sure that their interests do not contradict each other. Teasdale (2010b, p. 284) notes that a SE:

“... is not necessarily deceiving the resource holders in utilising OIM. Instead, those aspects of the organisation or group it is perceived that the audience would be sympathetic to are accentuated, and those aspects perceived as unfavourable are omitted”.

Thus, SE can also be an opportunity to ‘publicly rebrand’ where organisations ‘play out’ or ‘play down’ certain historical characteristics depending on their audience (Johnsen, 2012).

Summary of Definitional Debates on Social Enterprise

There are various definitional debates on what SE means as a term. Interestingly, the UK government’s ‘official definition’ comprises some elements of two different ideological interpretations within the ‘social enterprise school’, specifically the points related to an income generation emphasis, which are akin to the US approach, and imposing a limit on shareholders, which is allied with the European perspective. Yet, the successive Government policy papers predominantly reflect the achievement of social goals through business discourse which neglects the hybrid nature of SE income streams. Furthermore, the vaguely defined DTI’s (2002) SE term allows many organisations to identify themselves as a SE (Teasdale, 2010c; Teasdale, 2012b).

However, it should be noted that irrespective of the terminology, school, or organisational and legal form, or self-identified approach, what all forms have in common is that they focus explicitly on creating social value (Stevens, et al., 2009). Peattie and Morley (2008) note that there are at least two minimum criteria that identify a SE, which are: its trading activities, to a certain degree; and its focus on creating social benefits in society.

Taking this on board, this thesis employs the following broad definition of the term SE: a SE is an organisation with a hybrid nature which utilises its financial resources from the private market, non-commercial/voluntary sector and public sources and whose overall aim is to recycle accumulated income back into social objectives.

Social Enterprise Models in Practice

Unlike the debates summarised in the section above, Alter’s (2007) and Teasdale’s (2010a) descriptions of specific SE models focus on how different types of SE are

applied in practice. Alter (2007) identifies three types of SE in general: first, embedded SEs (embedded SEs); second, integrated SEs (integrated SEs); and third, external SE (external SEs) (Figure 2.2).

As Figure 2.2 captures, in *embedded* SEs social programmes and economic activities are combined. The enterprise activities are “embedded” within the organisation’s operations and social programmes are the central purpose of the business. “The ‘target groups’ are integral to the model as direct beneficiaries of social services”, who, for instance, works as employees of the project. (Alter, 2007, p.26).

In *integrated* SEs, the social programme intersects with economic activities, often sharing costs and assets. The integrated SEs may be structured as an enterprise project within the not-for-profit or as a separate entity.

In *external* SEs, social programmes are separated from economic activities. External SEs are usually created by parent not-for-profits to accumulate funds and re-invest it into their social services and/or operating costs (Alter, 2007).

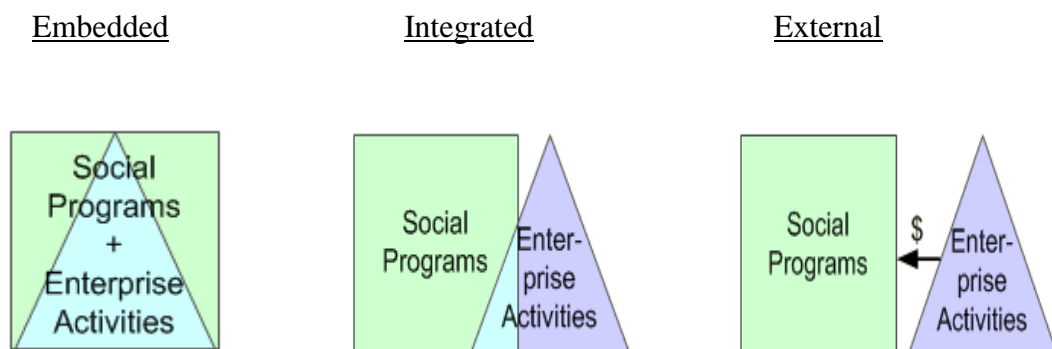


Figure 2.2 Social enterprise typology

Source: Alter (2007, p. 18)

The current study, following from the research aim of this study (see chapter 1), concentrates on *embedded* and *integrated* forms of SE in the homelessness field. As Alter (2007) noted above, despite some structural differences, these two models similarly aim to recruit disadvantaged people into their projects to enable them to be beneficiaries of their own labour. For this reason, these embedded and integrated SE types may have major significance in empowering their target beneficiaries.

In contrast, the *external* SE type is less relevant in the context of this thesis because, as noted above, firstly, it operates as an entirely commercial entity and, secondly, social programmes are separated from economic activities, and usually disadvantaged people are not employed in the project, instead it is mostly run by staff recruited from the mainstream labour market.

Alter (2007) also suggests a classification of SE types with reference to their field of operation, alongside practical examples that appear in the third sector, as summarised in Table 2.1.

Table 2. 1 Social enterprise types in the third sector

| Model | Description | Practical example |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|
| Entrepreneur support model | SE delivers entrepreneurial support and operating expenses | Economic development organisations, SMEs and microfinance institutions |
| Market intermediary model | Provides services to target group to help them access markets | Marketing supply cooperatives, fair trade, and agriculture organisations |
| Fee-for-service model | SE commercialises its social services and sells them directly to the clients | Membership organisations, trade associations, schools, museums, hospitals |
| Low-income client | Provides low income clients with access to products and services | Developing country context – vaccinations, prescription drugs, eye surgery |
| Employment model | Provides employment, opportunities and skills development to clients | Third sector organisations working with disadvantaged people |

Source: Alter (2007, p. 23)

As indicated in Table 2.1 above, entrepreneur support model SEs are mostly consultancy bodies which undertake SE start-ups and the development of support services for emerging or expanding SEs or individual entrepreneurs in the field. Types of services may be rendered through tailor-made consultancy, workshops and training courses for various topics within the SE world. This type of SE might also include financial institutions such as micro-credit organisations, which usually combine both undertaking financial services for ‘clients’ and allocation of loans superficially for their

‘target groups’ (Alter, 2007). The entrepreneur support model can combine embedded, integrated and external SE types, depending on the history and context of the establishment of the organisation.

In contrast, market intermediary SEs which maintain services and enable individual ‘clients’ or small scale geographically localised SEs access markets for their products, thus generating an income through market intermediary functions (Table 2.1). They mainly combine embedded and integrated SE types.

The third model given in Table 2.1, the fee-for-service model generates profit via the commercialisation of its social services by selling them directly to clients. They also provide contracting services for other sectors such as government and private companies to accumulate secondary sources. The fourth, the low income client model’s main service is the organisation of access to societies’ social services such as health and education. This type, as noted above, commonly takes place in developing countries and can combine integrated and external SE types.

As noted earlier, the current study specifically focuses on the *employment-based SE model*. Employment-centred SEs employs disadvantaged groups of people who struggle to compete in the mainstream labour market (Davister et al., 2004; Campi et al., 2006; Teasdale, 2010a; 2012a). Alter (2007) argues this model’s difference from general companies is that it creates a favourable work environment for its ‘clients’ via additional supportive services such as job coaching, skills developments workshops, physical therapy, mental health support and the provision of transitional shelter. This model allows self-sufficiency to be reached, it is argued, through the selling of products to a wider market. However, as discussed earlier, Teasdale (2012a) challenges employment-based SEs’, in the homelessness field, business capacity to support their social programme via trading in a marketplace. SEs income streams are, in fact, hybrid in nature in that they apply a ‘cost-transfer’ policy accumulating income from different sources.

Alter (2007) does not address the specific development of SE types in the homelessness field, there has been rapid expansion in SEs in the homelessness sector in recent years reported by other writers (Teasdale, 2010a, McKenna, 2011; Teasdale, 2012a), and discussed in more detail later in this chapter. Before this, however, the next section reviews the definition of homelessness and key policy debates in the UK.

Homelessness

Definition of Homelessness

There is no generally accepted definition of homelessness (Fitzpatrick, 2000), and it has been argued that the governments often use a ‘minimalist’ definition of the term for political reasons in order to diminish the visible size of the homelessness problem that needs to be addressed (Hutson and Clapham, 1999). A most widely used definition of homelessness is the one developed by FEANTSA and called the European Typology of Homelessness and Housing Exclusion (ETHOS). The ETHOS (2005, p.3) typology of homelessness attempts to capture the following four categories:

- ‘rooflessness’ (without a shelter of any kind who sleep rough);
- ‘houselessness’ (with a place to sleep but in temporary institutions and shelter);
- living in insecure housing (threatened with severe exclusion due to insecure tenancies, eviction, domestic violence);
- living in inadequate housing (in caravans on illegal campsites, in unfit housing, in extreme overcrowding).

This ETHOS definition of homelessness is helpful in terms of understanding the *housing* situation of a person. However it has been argued that it thereby neglects the emotional, social and psychological dimensions of the terms home and homelessness, such as one’s having a meaningful social relationships with friends, partners and enhancing one’s self-respect and self-dignity (Somerville, 1992). Somerville (1992) thus pays greater attention to these broader, social aspects of people’s well-being (a theme to which the author returns in discussing the ‘capabilities’ later in the thesis). It has also been argued that it is necessary to view the homelessness problem, not as only a ‘situation’, but as a process experienced by disadvantaged people (Hutson and Clapham 1999; Fitzpatrick et al., 2000a). For Fitzpatrick et al., (2000b) one should re-think approaching homelessness as a ‘fixed’ situation because it actually incorporates a complex set of interacting variables. What is commonly agreed is that, for the majority of people who become homeless, it is not a deliberate life-style ‘choice’.

This study adopts a broad definition of homelessness which captures both lack of adequate housing and also the wider social and psychological dimension of lacking a home (Somerville, 1992; ETHOS, 2005; Fitzpatrick, 2005).

Homelessness in the UK

Given that this thesis focuses on the operation of social enterprises in the UK homelessness arena, it is important to set out something about the context for this. In order to understand homelessness in the UK, one has to start with the 'statutory homelessness system' (Robson and Poustie, 1996; Fitzpatrick et al., 2011). Initially introduced by the Housing (Homeless Persons) Act 1977 across Great Britain (Saunders, 1986), this Act of Parliament was later incorporated into separate legislation for each of the constituent countries of the UK (Fitzpatrick et al., 2000b; Fitzpatrick et al., 2009; Fitzpatrick et al., 2011). This legislative framework ensured that local authorities had a statutory duty to accommodate certain homeless people (Pawson, 2009). "If a household is 'eligible', in 'priority need' and 'unintentionally homeless', then they are owed the 'main homelessness duty' " (Fitzpatrick et al., 2011 p.6) and this duty is to re-house a homeless household.

The statutory homelessness system set up a distinction between 'statutory homeless' and single homeless people, with most of the latter not entitled to the 'main homelessness duty' by local authorities (Fitzpatrick and Watts, 2011). The term 'single homelessness', is used in this thesis, as it is used for the most part in the UK, to mean people who are homeless without responsibility for dependent children.

Recently, the devolved government in Scotland expanded the statutory homelessness 'safety net' by abolishing the 'priority need' criterion. Thus, in contrast to England, single homeless people in Scotland are also now generally owed the 'main homelessness duty', "ending the traditional 'discrimination' against (non-vulnerable) single people and childless couples" (Fitzpatrick et al., 2011, p.7).

Even though in England there is little statutory protection for single homeless people, a range of non-statutory assistance initiatives to help single people have been devised with an emphasis on re-integrating homeless people into mainstream society, helping them to re-connect with social networks and involving them in meaningful activity.

“A key landmark in this process was the publication in March 2002 of the government policy report *More than a Roof*, which conceived of homelessness in England as a form of ‘social exclusion’ rather than simply a housing problem” (Fitzpatrick et al., 2011, p.5).

Significantly, in recent years due to the introduction of the ‘Hostels Capital Improvement Programme’ the conditions in hostels, day centres and other related frontline services for single homeless people have been much improved (Fitzpatrick et al, 2009).

Successive UK Governments have invested resources with the aim of facilitating single homeless people's integration into the labour market (Fitzpatrick et al., 2011). A key policy response has been to support and encourage SEs which facilitate homeless peoples’ integration into the paid workforce in the UK (ODPM, 2003a; Teasdale, 2012a, 2012b). The next section reviews the role and growth of employment-focused initiatives and SEs in the homelessness sector in the UK.

Social Enterprise in the Homelessness Field

Over the last decade or so, there has been increasing interest in employment-centred SEs as a means of empowering homeless people to enter the competitive labour market (Teasdale, 2010a). In 2003, the then Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) reported that SE is an ‘innovative’ approach which has the potential to change the employment opportunities of homeless people (ODPM, 2003b; Teasdale, 2010a).

The Labour Government’s (1997-2010) vision of the integration of homeless people into employment using the SE approach was articulated in two initiatives. The first was a three year programme called ‘Places of Change - Tackling Homelessness through the Hostels Capital Improvement Programme’, with a budget of £70 million (ODPM, 2005; Teasdale, 2012a). The ‘Places of Change’ programme aimed to encourage the development of entrepreneurial activities amongst accommodated homeless people. The programme also allocated funding for homeless focused SEs in England to conduct training for homeless and ex-homeless people. Thus it was aimed partly at increasing the employability of homeless people.

Second, the ‘SPARK’ programme, established with an initial government investment of £2.94m, in 2007, focused specifically on ‘investing’ in employment-based initiatives

among homelessness SEs which prioritise training, work experience and employment for homeless people in their project objectives (SPARK, 2009; Teasdale, 2012a). This initiative was presented as a social investment programme to support the development of SE organisations operating in the homelessness sector providing investment. It was based on the assumption that an enterprise approach was a sustainable tool to tackle the homelessness issue. It was managed by the TREES Group on behalf of the Department for Communities and Local Government for the period 2008-2011 with business consultancy support from the corporate world such as BT and PriceWaterhouseCoopers (SPARK, 2009). SPARK had the following specific programme objectives:

- To enable more homeless and vulnerably-housed people to move into independent living and employment
- To champion and build sustainable social enterprise models
- To increase sustainability and impact of the sector in tackling homelessness compared to existing models of intervention (SPARK, 2009).

The then Homeless Labour Minister Ian Wright stated: “Tackling homelessness requires new and innovative solutions and this is exactly what SPARK makes possible ...” (Wright, 2008 cited in Teasdale, 2012a, p. 516). Hence, Wright saw employment-centred SEs working with homeless people as a newer, more effective approach. From its launch, between 2008 and 2009, the SPARK programme allocated non-refundable social investment (in other words, a grant) to 23 SE projects which proposed employment and training initiatives for homeless people (SPARK, 2009).

The SE approach has also been stressed within the Conservative's Big Society vision, as noted earlier in this chapter, and a SE approach in tackling the acute issues faced by socially vulnerable people has been encouraged. For instance, the Government has established the Big Society Awards which includes, among other points, the promotion of SE models countrywide (Big Society Awards, 2013). This emphasis on SE as a policy response to homelessness has been sustained under the present Coalition Government in the UK, “...which supported SPARK 2011, and continued wider investment in work integration through the Work Programme” (Teasdale, 2012a, p. 516).

There are no published statistical data on the prevalence of homelessness-focused SEs in the UK. However, some scholars refer to data compiled by the Ethical Enterprise and Employment Network at Crisis in England (McKenna, 2011) and Social Firms UK. Tracey et al. (2011, p.68) note that “...a senior consultant providing advice to SEs that employ homeless people estimated that of the 800 non-profit organisations that support homeless people, around 80 percent use SE to a greater or lesser extent to achieve their objectives”. McKenna (2011) suggests, based on the Crisis database, that many SEs in the homelessness field are concentrated in London (35%). Earlier Alter’s (2007) general typology of SEs was outlined. Teasdale (2010a) furthers understanding of SE by contributing to the subject specifically in the classification of homelessness SE models. Teasdale’s research (2010a) outlines six models of SE within the field of homelessness, as described in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2 Models of social enterprise in the field of homelessness

| Model | Description | Example |
|-----------------------------------|---|------------------------------|
| (1) Revenue generator/mission | SE as an income stream for third sector organisations | Salvation Army War Cry |
| (2) Contracted service Provider | Homelessness related organisations delivering government contracts | Shelter |
| (3) Accommodation providers | Hostel and supported accommodation providers offering places to homeless people | St Mungo’s |
| (4) Community participation based | Hostel and supported accommodation providers offering places to homeless people | Emmaus |
| (5) Employment provider | SEs whose primary aim is to allow homeless people to earn an income | Big Issue |
| (6) Training and work experience | SEs providing homeless people with qualifications/(voluntary??)work experience | Crisis Skylight Cafes |
| (7) Hybrid | SEs combining two or more of the above models | Big Life Company, Shelter |

Source: Teasdale (2010a, p. 29)

As Table 2.2 indicates, Model 1 is a type of SE which carries out an enterprise activity in order to earn income and to cover programmatic expenses. Model 2, as Teasdale (2010a) notes, is when contracted service providers are mainly focused on the provision of housing advice and temporary accommodation. Model 3, hostel and supported accommodation providers offering places to homeless people are typical to the homeless sector. Model 4 provides community-based supported accommodation living environment, and is distinguished from Model 3 in the sense that it provides a sheltered job and communal work ‘production’ environment (Emmaus, 2001).

Models 5 and 6 are types of employment-focused SEs, with Model 5 relating to recruitment to paid work and Model 6 to the provision of skills enhancement and acquiring unpaid work experience voluntarily (Teasdale, 2012a). Thus, these models aim to facilitate the work integration of homeless people through gaining income, job skills and experience. Model 7 is a hybrid model which might involve more than two characteristics of any of the models indicated in the table above. Generally, hybrid organisations, which comprise characteristics of different sectors and operate at the crossroads of non-profit, profit and state spaces (Billis, 2010; Teasdale, 2012a; Bacq et al., 2013), accordingly provide the opportunity to utilise incomes from different sources (Campi et al., 2006 cited in Teasdale, 2012a).

Following from this, Teasdale (2012a, p. 530) has extended the study of SE models from a resource allocation perspective, wherein he challenges Alter’s (2007) embedded SE type. Teasdale (2012a) argues that embedded SEs “...should be conceptualised as hybrid organisations”. He then continues that:

“...this is because they are able to blend the legitimacy of third sector organisations with the legitimacy of private firms through balancing institutional logics of both. While these additional resources might be ‘free’ to the social enterprise, they involve redistribution from the state, individual, private firms, and existing charities” (Teasdale, 2012a, p. 531)

From this perspective, it is interesting to review the operation of employment-based SEs in the homelessness field in the UK, which aim to facilitate the work integration of homeless people through the provision of training, work experience and paid work. We turn to this issue in the next section.

Social Enterprise, Homelessness and Employment

Many people experiencing homelessness face multiple barriers to work and employment (Pleace et al., 1997; Kennedy and Fitzpatrick, 2001; Fitzpatrick 2005; McNaughton 2005; Harding and Willett, 2008; Smith, 2008; Rees; 2009; Paasche, 2009; Johnsen and Fitzpatrick 2010; Teasdale, 2010a). These barriers include those that relate to:

- Mental health
- General physical health problems
- Substance abuse
- Lack of adequate and affordable housing
- Low level of qualifications/education
- Lack of communication and social skills
- Lack of core life-skills
- Lack of work experience and confidence
- Low level of self-esteem
- Stigmatisation related to their living situation
- Family related problems
- Problems relating to physical appearance
- Previous criminal record history

This range of barriers highlights the value of holistic and individualised support programmes, and in particular services that capture areas such as housing support, health and psychological support, counselling, motivational support. For example, there is evidence that homelessness often results in the social isolation of a person and affects the individual's self-confidence and self-image (McNaughton, 2005, Teasdale, 2010a).

Successive UK Governments have promoted SEs such as The Big Issue and Aspire as two 'flagship' 'innovative' mechanism to address unemployment among homeless people and to tackle homelessness in general. The Big Issue was set up in 1991 in London to help the homeless to earn an income by retailing The Big Issue magazine on the streets. The idea originated from a similar Street News publication in New York, USA, where a vendor selling this paper who was homeless could keep half of the cover price for every sold copy (Hanks and Swithinbank, 1997, Teasdale, 2010a). The Big

Issue is based on the idea that homeless people can increase their self-esteem by earning money (Trotter, 2001; Torck, 2001). Four separate divisions of The Big Issue edition were established in the UK with policies and methods that diverged in some respects (Fitzpatrick and Kennedy, 2000). For example, the Big Issue in the North merged with Diverse Resources to create the Big Life Company, "...one of the UK's largest SEs with businesses in areas including childcare, healthcare, buildings maintenance and employment training" (Teasdale, 2010a, p.7) Teasdale (2010a, p. 28) notes:

"A subsidiary charity has been set up to attract charitable funding to help meet the social needs of clients. Thus the Big Life Company has been able to create an integrated pathway towards employment for homeless people. This hybrid model also involves hybrid resource mixes, relying to differing extents on volunteers, trading in the market, state contracts, grants and charitable donations".

At the moment, the Big Issue is not only operating successfully the UK but its model has also been replicated by SEs in some other countries.

Aspire was one of the first SEs in the UK which applied business franchising to expand its entrepreneurship model. (Tracey and Jarvis, 2007; Tracey et al., 2011). It was established in 2001 with an investors' commitment of £400,000 to support the funding of franchising projects. A new company (Aspire Group) was set up for investment transactions.

Aspire franchises were established in London, Birmingham, Sheffield, Brighton, Cambridge, Manchester, Blackpool, Oxford, and Southampton. Tracey and Jarvis (2007, p. 621) note that

"...the idea of tackling homelessness through social enterprise also captured the imagination of government, with the "Homelessness Czar" (appointed by Tony Blair to tackle homelessness in Britain) taking a strong interest in the business [Aspire], and promoting it across the United Kingdom".

Within two and a half years of its establishment in 2001, Aspire employed more than 150 homeless people. However, Aspire, in contrast to the Big Issue, experienced financial difficulties and ceased its activities in 2004 as a result of bankruptcy:

“After just a few months, it became clear that there were serious problems with the Aspire business model. Most significantly, the relatively narrow product range appeared to have limited appeal to customers, and sales were considerably below projections. Morale also suffered as the system involved franchise managers supervising employees between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., and delivering goods in the evening, often until 10 p.m. Moreover, the difficulties of managing and supporting the employees, many of whom were battling addiction, placed severe strain on the franchisees”. (Tracey and Jarvis, 2007, p. 628)

There are also the well-established Emmaus Communities which is another work-based SE in the homelessness field (Teasdale, 2010a). The concept comes from France and was brought to the UK by a Cambridge businessman in 1990 who had experience of living and working in a French Community as a student. Emmaus Communities’ homeless residents are called ‘Companions’ (it originally meant: ‘one who eats bread with another’ Emmaus, UK, 2001, p.1) There are usually between 15 and 30 companions in a community. All companions are expected to work mainly refurbishing and reselling second-hand furniture and electrical goods (Fitzpatrick et. al, 2000; Clarke, 2010). The staff working in Emmaus suggested that a SE may need “...understanding of people, awareness of drug and alcohol issues, working with individuals with mental health problems...” (Lovatt et al., 2007, p. 37). For some SE practitioners in the homelessness field “...the supportive working or training environment is more important than any specific qualifications or skills learned” (Teasdale, 2012a, p. 522). Unlike Aspire, Emmaus Communities did not experience failure in maintaining its operation. This was related to the fact that its income streams come from individual donations and public funding, as well as of trading its product on the market (Lovatt et al., 2007).

Some other work-based SEs in the homelessness field in the UK have been described in recent research by Teasdale (2012a). He researched six relevant SE projects, aiming to identify the strategies they adopted in order to ‘fit’ their social and commercial goals, and found some very interesting results (Teasdale, 2012a). The main social goal of three of the case study organisations - Street Cleaning Works, Dry Cleaning Works and Removal Works - was to provide paid employment to homeless people, whilst the remaining three projects - Environment Training, Garden Furniture and Integrated

Living Training - had programmes specifically aimed at facilitating homeless people's entry into employment through the provision of training and work experience. These six case study SEs, similar to Emmaus Communities, managed the tension of social and economic objectives through securing hybrid financial sources from consumers, the public, private donors, and other 'partnering' third sector organisations rendering social assistance to homeless people.

Significantly, Teasdale found that "...none of the case study organisations was able to provide social support to clients funded through commercial revenue..." and that each of these organisations was dependent on either external funding to cover the costs of the project's social support component or social service organisations to render assistance to homeless people (Teasdale, 2012a, p. 529). These arrangements "...enabled them [six case study SEs] to avoid the financial collapse suffered by high profile organisations in the homelessness field, such as Aspire, which underestimated the additional support needs required by their homeless employees" (Mozier and Tracey, 2010 cited in Teasdale, 2012a, p. 529).

Thus, important questions raised in this regard (Teasdale, 2010a): is the SE approach as 'innovative' as is often assumed by policy-makers, and how does it differ from traditional organisational approaches (in the charity and commercial sectors) in reality? How effective are employment-centred models in helping homeless people to overcome the issues they face, and from the perspective of homeless people themselves, does being a SE make a difference?

Conclusion

This chapter indicated that there has been sustained interest in SEs that runs across different UK Governments, and is now allied with the idea of the 'Big Society' under the current Conservative-led Coalition Government elected in 2010. This chapter also found that the term SE is a contested concept which involves various definitional debates on what SE means as a term. The successive Government policy papers promote the achievement of social goals through business discourse neglecting the hybrid nature of SE income streams. Furthermore, the vaguely defined DTI's (2002) SE term allows many organisations to identify themselves as a SE (Teasdale, 2012b). However, it should be noted that irrespective of the terminology, school, or

organisational and legal form, self-identified approach what all forms have in common is that they focus explicitly on creating social value (Stevens, et al., 2009). Based on these points, this chapter defined a SE broadly with reference to its hybridity in its income generating function and explicit focus on its social aim.

It also described the specific five different SE types in general and six SE models applied in practice in homelessness sector. This study specifically focuses on the employment-based SE model which aims to employ the disadvantaged groups of people who struggle to compete in the mainstream labour market.

This chapter suggested that there is no generally accepted definition of homelessness and the appropriate definition of the key term homelessness in this thesis drew both on the housing situation and also on the wider social and psychological well-being of homeless people. Single homelessness, as used in this thesis, means homeless people without dependent children.

The significantly favourable political context over the past decade or longer in the UK has facilitated an increase in the number of SEs in the homelessness sector. In particular, there has been an emphasis on supporting and encouraging SEs with a specific focus on employment which facilitate the integration of homeless people into vocational activities and the paid workforce. This has been mirrored in some SE programmes in the homelessness field which aimed to ‘invest’ in employment-based initiatives among homelessness SEs. This chapter also suggested that there are different success and failure stories within work integration SEs in the homelessness field. However, the key question which requires further consideration is whether SEs with an employment focus ‘empower’ homeless people. In order to do explore this question one needs to develop a conceptual framework to operationalise the concept of empowerment. This is discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 3: Conceptual Framework: ‘Empowerment’, ‘Self-Help’ and ‘Capabilities’

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to develop the conceptual framework that is applied throughout the rest of this thesis. In so doing, this chapter engages with the key concepts of ‘empowerment’, ‘self-help’ and ‘capabilities’. The interpretation and theorising of the policy-oriented notion of ‘empowerment’ is grounded on various theories of the underlying concept of ‘power’. For this reason, this chapter firstly presents the different theories of ‘power’. The chapter then reviews empowerment literature in more detail in order to highlight practical domains of the concept that are applicable in contemporary service delivery and identify its link to the notion of ‘self-help’. Finally, this chapter presents the ‘capabilities’ approach which aims to fill the gap identified in the empowerment literature and outlines a means of operationalising the concept of ‘empowerment’ for use in this study.

Power

Considerable literature exists debating the nature and dynamics of power (Mills 1956; Dahl, 1957, 1961; Bachrach and Baratz, 1970; Lukes, 1974, 1986). The first wave of contributors included Marx (1975) and Weber (1968), as well as elite (Dahl, 1961; Mills, 1956) and pluralist theories (Bachrach and Baratz, 1970; Lukes, 1974, 1986), which helped to achieve a greater understanding of the operation of power in modern societies within a ‘power over’ perspective. The second wave focused on the ‘power to’ and ‘power with’ models. The third wave comprises contributions from post-modern writers and the ‘power within’ model (Foucault, 1980; 1986; Lemke, 2007; Clegg, 1989; Rowlands, 1998). Each of these is described briefly below.

First Wave: ‘Power-Over’ Model

Power within this framework is viewed as economic power, above all the power over others possessed by those who own or control the means of production (Marx, 1975). Economic power here is seen as a ‘concrete’ process that is produced structurally. However, for some writers, structural economic power may ‘alienate’ a certain group of people who do not own the means of production (Lukes, 1974; Craig and Mayo, 1995).

Thus, for Marxism, it is vital to overcome structurally imposed 'false conscience' and to move on to reach 'true conscience'. The weakness of this stance, however, is that it maintains that power is led by only one group, the economic power holders, thus failing to acknowledge that there could potentially be many groups of collective power holders. This weakness is responded to by another group of writers, such as Weber (1968), those ascribing to the elitist school of thought (Mills, 1956), and pluralists (Dahl, 1961; Bachrach and Baratz, 1970; Lukes, 1974, 1986).

Amongst these, Weber (1968) maintains an 'individualist' approach in studying power. However, he avoids the economic ownership and non-ownership dilemma in terms of the location of dominant power. Servian (1996) extends this logic and also argues that power can be attributable to individuals; however for Craig and Magio (1995) a person is usually dependent on external resources thus signalling a lack of power.

However, 'pluralist' writers such as Dahl (1961) argue that the exercise of power is not necessarily associated with resources. For Dahl (1961 p. 208), prevailing decision-making seems "the best way to determine which individuals and collective groups have 'more' power in social life". Thus for Dahl the decision-making process in a political platform involves 'direct' observable conflict, overt and 'fixed' dimensions of power. However, the weakness of this perspective is that it can lead scholars to focus only on observable conflict in power analysis, at the expense of other (less observable) dimensions (Lukes, 1974).

Second Wave: 'Power to' Model

Bachrach and Baratz (1970, p. 948) critique the pluralists and note that researchers such as Dahl (1961) fail to take into account institutional bias. Based on these observations, they argue that not only is power exercised, as within a pluralist framework, in the platform of an observable episode of decision-making alone, but it is also exercised by preventing issues from ever reaching that platform. Thus, they argue, one should also analyse covert power.

Lukes (1974) argues that restricting emphasis to observable conflict, be it overt or covert, neglects the latent conflicts over the interests of power possessors and the 'real interests' of the powerless. He stresses that structural bias might work in a way that meets the interests of power holders and works against the 'real interests' of a

subordinate group to retain the 'status quo'. Lukes (1974, p.23) notes: "...A may exercise power over B by influencing, shaping or determining his very wants" through mass media manipulation and socialisation. This identifies potential issues that might cause conflict. This has clear parallels with earlier Marxist conceptions of ideology and 'false consciousness' (Lukes, 1974). Rowlands (1998) notes that people who are systematically denied power and influence in society internalise the messages they receive about what they are supposed to be like, and they come to believe the messages to be true. This 'internalised oppression' is an example of Lukes' 'unobservable conflict'.

Third Wave: 'Power Within' Model

Foucault's (1980) counter-balance power model suggests that one should analyse power in the particularities of social practices and public discourses, which are reflected through different policies, programmes and projects and which involve the social constitution of actors through these discourses. Clegg (1989), who is influenced by Foucault, also argues that one should attempt to interpret how power operates rather than to define what it is. In his view, power is relational. He views power as a de-centred ongoing circle which operates as a constantly changing complex process, whilst circuits of power operate at triple levels such as agency, social integration, and system integration. Post-modern theorists also influenced feminist writers such as Rowlands (1998), Parpart (2002), Zimmermann (1995), and Kieffer (1984) who explain how 'individual' level powerlessness, what they call 'internalised oppression', might also impact on intangible power dynamics at the micro-level of individuals' networks 'collectively' to reach 'power to' (this is discussed in more detail in sections below).

Clearly, there is no single most appropriate theory of power. The discussion above has however highlighted the concrete outcome-based; ever-changing process-led; individual and collective conceptual dimensions that are highly relevant to the next discussion on empowerment (Murray, 1999).

'Empowerment'

The concept of power underpins the notion of empowerment. What distinguishes empowerment, however, is that it is a more political and policy-oriented term in contemporary service delivery than power is. The following subsections outline key

debates relating to the conceptualisation of empowerment, including whether it should be considered a process or an outcome, and whether it is an individual and/or collective phenomenon.

‘Outcome-based’ and ‘Process-led’ Dimensions of Empowerment

One of the key debates highlighted in relevant literature relates to whether empowerment should be conceptualised as a ‘process’ or concrete ‘outcome’ (Murray, 1999; Mann, 2006). Some reports note that the administrators of projects that aim to empower people attempt to produce quantifiable and tangible results (Riger, 1993; Baistow, 1994; Baxter, 1996). This is the case in the context of poverty reduction projects where service providers tend to seek immediate quantifiable results (Alcock et al., 1996).

In contrast to the above points, those who stress the process aspect of empowerment argue that it is not a fixed phenomenon and that any accomplishment of an empowerment objective is a process in itself. Most feminist writers such as Rowlands (1995) argue the ultimate aim of empowerment is to overcome ‘internalised oppression’. Some critics argue that process-led empowerment is time-consuming (Baxter, 1996). Kieffer (1984) argues despite the fact that empowerment is a time-consuming process; it provides the person with the opportunity to re-evaluate their relationship with society. He maintains that a power transfer takes place eventually and that it is not a matter of a quick fix; rather, it is “a transforming process” (Kieffer, 1984, p. 27).

However, for Mechanic (1991, p. 641) outcome-based and process aspects of empowerment are interdependent in that individuals “...learn to see a closer correspondence between their goals and a sense of how to achieve them...”, thus there is a relationship between their process-related efforts and concrete life outcomes.

‘Individual’ and ‘Collective’ Dimension of Empowerment

In contrast to the ‘outcome’ and ‘process’ dimensions just discussed, there is a more extensive debate between scholars who stress the ‘individual’ as opposed to the ‘collective’ aspects of empowerment.

'Individual' Empowerment

Those writers who advocate the individual aspect of empowerment conceptualise it as an approach to building self-confidence through gaining various required skills (Kieffer 1984, Larson et al., 2005; Rosenheck et al., 2006) and competence development (Breton, 1994). These scholars highlight the significance of acquiring power and resources through the enhancement of skills and competence. Significantly, Freire (1973) and Kincheloe (2008) view education as a source of intellectual development, critical consciousness and self-determination (Lee, 1994) reaching a stage when one has a personal sense of individuality (Becker et al., 2004). Thus Freire (1973), Lee (1994) and Becker et al. (2004) describe educational empowerment dimensions. In a similar vein, Dickerson (1998) and Zimmermann (1995) advocate individual-level empowerment and emphasise the socio-psychological domain, which is conceived as the development of positive self-esteem and self-efficacy to affiliate with family, peers and other social networks with equal dignity. Gist (1987), however, focuses on employment, thus emphasising the economic aspect of empowerment. In a work context, Gist (1987) also identifies competence as one's acquiring of skills and the fulfilment of duties and achieving a better perception of oneself through employment.

It is interesting to note sub-themes of the individual empowerment debate. In contemporary service delivery, some researchers conceptualise empowerment as individual 'self-help' and 'consumer' approaches (Croft and Beresford, 1992). Individual self-help assumes encouragement of a greater individual responsibility for the well-being of 'problem individuals' (Fitzpatrick et al., 2000b). Emphasis on individual self-help and self-reliance have sometimes been utilised for the purpose of increasing the responsibility of private citizens while limiting the role of service providers (Kahn and Bender, 1985). Thus, empowerment conceptualised as self-help assumes the transfer of responsibility from service provider to service user and maintenance of the individual's own self-reliance.

In contrast, the objective of the 'consumer' model of empowerment is to enhance choice for consumers. This model, as in the marketplace, emphasises the prioritisation of the preferences of the 'consumer' (Croft and Beresford, 1992) and thus it may ensure the importance of the service-user position by promising better individual choice. Such an approach may bring about a relatively quick power shift from service providers to

consumers, as the latter act as direct ‘purchasers’ of their service packages (Gaventa, 1980; Barnes, 1999; Barnes and Walker, 1998; Kennedy and Fitzpatrick, 2001). However, the ‘consumer’ model, as Hirschman (1970) has echoed, presupposes the possibility of exit where an organisation is incentivised ‘to vote with its feet’ to correct any faults that may lead to the loss of customers.

In the ‘consumer’ model there is a shift in the balance of responsibility between what tend to be the normal activities for service managers and what consumers are expected to do by themselves, which gives the service organisations an opportunity to achieve a greater degree of flexibility. Here the shift in the balance of responsibilities, in turn, may lead to the empowerment of organisations rather than their consumers (Gilliat et al., 2000, p.347). In this sense, the ‘consumer’ model is consistent with the conceptualisation of empowerment as ‘self-help’, where individual service users are expected to achieve, as Edgar et al. (1999, p.23) have pointed out, ‘their own normalisation’. These individual-based theories, however, fail to provide a consistent explanation of how challenges might be overcome if people are affected by external constraints, as there could be circumstances when one does not control external resources (Craig and Mayo, 1995).

Collective Empowerment

In contrast to the above discussions, there are writers who view collective action as the key dimension of empowerment (Croft and Beresford, 1993; Rhodes, 1987). Here, empowerment is defined as the unification of people sharing similar circumstances to challenge and overcome the problems they face (Gutierrez, 1990; Staples, 1990). Gutierrez (1992) argues that collective empowerment is an attempt to identify yourself with similar others, whereas for Peterson et al. (2005) it is an opportunity for social cohesion and affiliation, mutual learning and a sense of belonging to a group or community. In this sense, both Gutierrez (1992) and Peterson et al., (2005) emphasise the ‘social’ dimension of empowerment.

However, for Rhodes (1987), collective empowerment provides a ‘political’ dimension and he advocates a shift from individual-level consumerist types of empowerment to a ‘citizenship’ model. According to Rhodes (1987) and Croft and Beresford (1993), collective empowerment requires involvement in a participatory environment, providing a greater voice for disadvantaged people through decision-making to challenge

structural power imbalances. There is thus a major distinction between the ‘citizenship’ model and the individual ‘self-help’ and ‘consumerist’ approaches described above. Interestingly, under the current Conservative-led Coalition Government’s notion of the ‘Big Society’ rhetoric, ‘empowerment’ means people being self-reliant rather than being dependent on the state and in this context the term ‘empowerment’ is mainly conceptualised as disadvantaged people taking more responsibility for themselves (Settle, 2010; Kisby, 2010; Pattie and Johnston, 2011; Teasdale et al., 2012, see Chapter 2). Thus, the underlying thrust of the Big Society is grounded on the ‘consumerism’ model and promotion of ‘self-help’.

Some writers note, however, that collective empowerment and its ‘citizenship’ approach overlook the pressing basic needs of marginalised people (Kennedy and Fitzpatrick 2001). Kennedy and Fitzpatrick (2001) point out that a lack of immediate physical and social needs of certain categories of disadvantaged people may limit their ability to prioritise their acute issues on a political platform.

Interestingly, some researchers stress the interconnectedness between individual and collective empowerment (Croft and Beresford, 1993; Dickerson, 1998). It has been argued that the empowerment process can be seen as “...a journey from personal needs to influencing and changing the attitudes and values, and the policy and practices that affect them” (Croft and Beresford 1993, p.123). In other words, some people might go back and forth between individual and collective experiences of empowerment depending on their context and life circumstances.

Domains of Empowerment

The above discussion suggested that aside from outcome versus process-led and individual versus collective empowerment, there are aspects that cut across the dichotomy of empowerment via substantive and specific ‘economic’; ‘socio-psychological’; ‘educational’; and ‘political’ domains. Each of these is described below.

Firstly, the ‘economic’ aspect of empowerment stresses that the disadvantaged person can acquire skills, experience and competence through employment which may enable them to achieve a better perception of themselves and raise confidence (Gist, 1987; Breton, 1994; Parpart, 2002; Larson et al., 2005; Rosenheck et al., 2006). Thus, this point focuses on employment emphasising the ‘economic’ aspect of empowerment.

Secondly, the ‘social-psychological’ domain focuses on the necessity for the development of positive self-esteem, self-efficacy and dignity through affiliation with family, peers and other social networks (Gutierrez, 1992; Kieffer, 1984; Zimmermann, 1995; Dickerson, 1998; Peterson et al., 2005). This is an element of identifying oneself with similar others and an opportunity for social cohesion and affiliation, mutual learning and a sense of belonging to a group or community.

Thirdly, the ‘educational’ domain highlights the importance of education, skills and competence enhancement as a source of self-determination, critical consciousness and sense of individuality (Lee, 1994; Kincheloe, 2008; Becker et al., 2004).

Finally, ‘political’ empowerment stresses vulnerable individuals’ collective participation in the decision-making process which may provide a greater voice for disadvantaged people through decision-making and to challenge structural power imbalances (Rhodes, 1987; Croft and Beresford, 1992).

Significantly, however, the empowerment literature fails to adequately capture vulnerable individuals’ diversity, the uniqueness of each person and the impact of context on the extent to which they are (or are not) empowered. This gap is addressed by Sen (1992) and Nussbaum (2000) who are synonymous with the capabilities approach. The next section discusses the ‘capabilities’ approach.

‘Capabilities’ Approach

I will argue that the ‘capabilities’ approach provides a robust means of operationalising the concept of ‘empowerment’. The approach is thus central to the conceptual framework of the current study. Capability has been defined by Sen (1992, p.40) as “...a person’s freedom to lead one type of life or another”. Sen’s aim is to show us the centrality of freedom in human development and he identifies three interdependent spaces in which human potential might be enhanced. These three spaces are: the space of ‘commodities’ and their characteristics; the space of ‘capabilities’ (freedom to do and to be); and finally, the space of functioning (a person’s end states). Sen proposes that there is a clear separation between those marginalised people’s needs that appear in the space termed ‘space of commodities’ from those needs which are performed in the ‘space of functioning’. The first of these spaces captures resources, whereas the latter is

an area of achievements, of individuals' valued lifestyle and true selves as human beings. Sen (1992, p.29) emphasises that:

...the relationship between primary goods (including incomes), on the one hand, and well-being, on the other, may vary because of personal diversities in the possibility of converting primary goods (including incomes) into achievements of well-being... ...the variety of physical and social characteristics that affect our lives and make us what we are.

According to Dean (2010, p. 83) in between these two layers is the space of capabilities which is "the most essential of human needs or substantive freedoms". For Sen an individual's exercise of free will is a significant part of being human. He argues that:

Freedom and choice: a person's position in a social arrangement can be judged in two different perspectives... (1) the actual achievement, and (2) the freedom to achieve. Achievement is concerned with what we manage to accomplish, and freedom with the real opportunity that we have to accomplish what we value. Capability is, thus, a set of vectors of functionings, reflecting the person's freedom to lead one type of life or another (Sen 1992, p.40).

The central idea of capabilities is that one should refocus on disadvantaged members as ends in themselves, and the recognition of human heterogeneity (Sen, 1992, 2004; Nussbaum, 2000), individual 'separateness' (Johnsen and Fitzpatrick 2010) and diversity, bearing in mind differences in personal conversion functions and the influence of context. The capabilities approach therefore suggests a dual methodology: it aims, on the one hand, "...at a set of metrics of 'quality life' within a diverse range of settings and on the other a normative framework for judging particular policy proposals" (Robeyns, 2003a, p.67). This dual methodology is, arguably, the first strength of the capabilities framework.

A second strength of the capabilities approach is that it emphasises the importance of marginalised individuals being empowered in a way that overcomes 'unobservable conflict' (Lukes, 1974; Sen, 1997; Nussbaum, 2000). From this perspective, empowerment embraces two basic freedoms: freedom from constraints, and freedom regarding the development of one's human potential so that one is able to plan his/her

life (Cocks and Cockram, 1997). In other words, empowerment through enhanced capabilities should enable an individual to achieve the functioning in which one is capable of realising 'true interests' (Lukes, 1974; Hamilton, 1999; Hill, 2003). As Hill (2003, p.121) argues:

...the capability approach does not identify the interests of the individual with her stated or revealed preferences. Rather, it assesses the individual's capability to achieve valued functionings by scrutinizing her situation from different perspectives, in a manner consistent with true interests theory.

Thirdly, while Sen (1992) left the content of the capabilities list open, Nussbaum (2000, pp. 79-80) has tried to concretise the concept by suggesting an operational list of central human capabilities, these being:

- 1) **Life:** this involves having a sense of physical safety and being able to have a normal human lifespan.
- 2) **Bodily health:** this captures having reasonable health, and the ability to meet basic needs for food, shelter and basic healthcare.
- 3) **Bodily integrity:** this dimension incorporates bodily well-being, being able to move freely from place to place; enhancing safety, living in a safe area and not being in a situation where one feels unsafe.
- 4) **Senses, imagination, and thought:** this means being able to develop one's own self as a human being in terms of spirituality and creativity; being able to take part in intellectual activity of one's own choice; also basic education and the ability to develop creative activities for inner development.
- 5) **Emotions:** this involves being able to develop interaction with other people without excessive fear, anxiety, abuse or ignorance.
- 6) **Affiliation:** this aspect is divided into two parts:
 - a) being able to interact with, having a meaningful positive social relationship with other people, to have the capability for friendship and association with others based on shared interests; and
 - b) Interacting with others on the basis of equal dignity, self-respect and self-worth.
- 7) **Practical reason:** this domain involves being able to plan and to conceive of one's own conception of a good life as a result of enhanced capabilities in all domains of a person's life.

- 8) **Other species:** this aspect captures one's ability to express care and concern for the natural environment and animals.
- 9) **Play:** this refers to one's capacity to flourish in terms of play, being able to laugh and to enjoy recreational activities.
- 10) **Control over one's Environment:** this domain incorporates both political and materials emphases. **The political** aspect captures one's ability to take part freely in political processes in order to influence to the decision-making process in those areas that concerns his or her life. **The material** aspect focuses on one's economic well-being, in particular access to a job, socialising and establishing relationships of mutual recognition with other workers, and to hold property on an equal basis with others.

From the above list one can note that capabilities are multi-dimensional. The review of the empowerment concept, noted earlier, featured 'economic' (Gist, 1987; Breton, 1994; Parpart, 2002; Larson et al., 2005; Rosenheck et al., 2006), 'socio- psychological' (Gutierrez, 1992; Kieffer 1984; Zimmermann, 1995; Dickerson, 1998; Peterson et al., 2005), 'educational' (Freire, 1973; Lee, 1994; Kincheloe, 2008; Becker et al., 2004) and 'political' aspects of people's lives (Rhodes, 1987; Croft and Beresford, 1992). All these dimensions are reflected in the above capabilities list developed by Nussbaum (2000). Thus, 'capabilities' holistically encapsulates the above noted empowerment dimensions.

The capabilities approach's added value is that it clearly separates the 'bodily' dimension such as life, physical health, and bodily integrity; and captures the 'creative' domain of life which encompasses senses, imagination, thought, play and inner development. It should also be noted that the 10th capability - namely people's right to a material sense of control - also refers to their opportunity to be involved in work. Nussbaum (2000, p.221), crucially, makes it clear that "...we cannot satisfy the need for one of them (these domains) by giving a larger amount of another one". In other words, she points out that the empowerment process should be pursued through enhancing individuals' capabilities in all of these dimensions and that one cannot be prioritised over others. Thus, one should avoid to attain one empowerment domain "at the expense of another" (McNaughton, 2010, p. 23) and "...all are of central importance, and all are distinct in quality" (Nussbaum 1992, p. 222). However, Nussbaum also accepts the fact

that this list can be amended by other researchers depending on the subject of the study (Gasper and van Staveren, 2003; Robeyns, 2003b).

Within the capabilities approach, priority is given to vulnerable people's autonomy and 'choice' and it is aimed at promoting their ability to be able to live their conception of a 'good life'. Also importantly, the capabilities approach focuses on empowering homeless people as ends in themselves.

In later works Sen (2004) and Nussbaum (2000) both acknowledge the vital importance of public participation by emphasising the capability of practical reason and deliberative democracy in influencing policy. In some senses this fits well with the concept of citizenship. However, Nussbaum (2003) argues that one should avoid assuming 'equal citizenship', since individuals do not have the capabilities "to function as equals". In other words, one should take into account 'conversion' factors which determine people's capability to achieve a given range of functions.

The capabilities approach has been applied in various fields (Alkire, 2005). In the housing and homelessness sector, the work of McNaughton (2010) is worth noting, given that she studied the impact of re-housing single homeless people with complex lives. McNaughton (2010) raised the following question: what functions are homeless people capable of attaining when they are rehoused? Her research showed interesting results. Importantly, even after being accommodated, many homeless people were, in her view "...still lacking essential functions identified by Nussbaum" (McNaughton, 2010, p. 38). She (McNaughton, 2010, p. 34) notes:

Obtaining independent housing such as a social rented tenancy, after being in other forms of accommodation for the homeless, it would be assumed, should allow people to have the capacity to engage in affiliations, play, and so on. However it was found here that this capacity was rarely realized. The isolation that the participants felt when they were housed and no longer homeless was often intense – they felt that they no longer had the capacity to have affiliations and little opportunity for pleasure or recreation in their lives – not only because they lacked economic resources, but also because they lacked people in their lives that they could share affiliations with.

In other words, here housing functioned as both an enabling and constraining element on individuals' capacity to attain core capabilities. McNaughton (2010) concludes that housing provision would have greater value if people were simultaneously provided with support to develop the other human potentials listed in Nussbaum's capabilities.

However, the capabilities approach is not without its critics. According to some writers such as Deneulin and Stewart (2002), the capabilities approach is too individualistic in methodology as it stresses excessively capabilities through the individual human being's perspective. On the other hand, the capabilities approach stands against sacrificing the "...interests of any given individuals for promotion (or even maintenance) of aggregate welfare" (Johnsen and Fitzpatrick 2010, p. 288) thus ensuring that equal weight is given to all the people's capabilities (Nussbaum and Sen, 1993; Johnsen and Fitzpatrick 2010; McNaughton, 2010). Moreover Sen (1985) has attempted to show that the capability approach is grounded on "...the individual's freedom to act in pursuit of goals other than self-interest" (Sen, cited in Bellet et al., 2007 p.198). For Robeyns (2003b) this should be viewed as 'ethical individualism'.

In the context of this thesis, the concept of 'capabilities' is valuable because it provides a holistic, multi-dimensional empowerment concept which, as noted above, incorporates 'bodily', 'economic' and 'political', 'social and emotional, 'intellectual' and 'creative' aspects of people's lives. In turn, it allows for analytical traction in operationalising empowerment in a practical, testable way. Individuals' well-being and substantive freedoms are analysed "...by focussing on what people are actually able to do and be, from the context they operate within..." (McNaughton, 2010, p. 62). Thus, it enables a reflexive approach and overcomes the important limitations of the earlier noted classical empowerment conceptualisation, specifically its failure to adequately capture vulnerable individuals' diversity, the uniqueness of each person, the differences in personal 'conversion' factors, and the impact of context.

In this regard, the author contends that, in the light of the range of complex issues that a homeless person experiences (see Chapter 2), the capabilities approach offers a more balanced and comprehensive approach than traditional empowerment models. The author has, thus, linked the classical empowerment dimensions with an adjusted capabilities list to use as an analytical framework. This capabilities-grounded empowerment framework is summarised in Table 3.1 below:

Table 3.1 A Capabilities-grounded empowerment framework

| Empowerment domains | Capability list |
|---|--|
| Bodily (note: this domain is not covered by classical empowerment conceptualisation) | Life: having a safe life, preserving a physical life, a sense of physical safety. |
| | Bodily health: having reasonable physical and mental health, ability to meet basic needs for food, shelter and basic healthcare. |
| | Bodily integrity: bodily needs, enhancing safety, feeling safe, living in a safe area, not being in a situation where one feels unsafe. |
| Economic and political | <p>Practical reason: having one's own version of a good life, ability to conceive one's own conception of a good life.</p> <p>Control over one's environment: having the (financial) resources and (political) power to pursue one's own version of the 'good life', to be able to plan one's life and to realise aspirations.</p> |
| Social and emotional | Affiliation and emotions: being able to interact with, having a meaningful positive social relationship with other people, on the basis of equal dignity and self-respect, how one is viewed by other people, how one perceives oneself to be viewed by other people. |
| Creative and intellectual (note: this domain is not captured by classical empowerment conceptualisation) | Senses, imagination and thought: a person's capabilities in relation to developing his/her own 'true self' as a human being in terms of creativity, learning and intellectual activity of one's own choice, and spirituality and inner development. |

Taking into account the complex issues homeless people face, the capabilities-grounded empowerment framework enriches the traditional empowerment debate. It comprises four main domains, as shown in Table 3.1. First, it provides a nuanced 'bodily' empowerment dimension which encompasses having reasonable physical and mental

health; safe and secure living circumstances; and the ability to meet other fundamental physical needs, such as for food and basic healthcare. The second, 'economic and political' empowerment dimension incorporates capabilities such as having the (financial) resources and (political) power to pursue one's own version of the 'good life'. The third, 'social and emotional', domain involves a person's ability to engage in meaningful social relationships on the basis of equal dignity and self-respect, including with peers in the workplace, friends, partners, children, and extended family members. It also relates to the enhancement of an individual's self-confidence, self-esteem and positive self-perception (and is thus strongly associated with the mental health dimension of bodily empowerment discussed above). Finally, the 'creative and intellectual' empowerment domain, which is as noted earlier also absent from traditional empowerment literature, includes activities aimed at developing a person's capabilities in relation to developing his/her own 'true self' as a human being in terms of creativity, learning and intellectual activity of one's own choice, and spirituality and inner development.

This capabilities-grounded empowerment framework is used in the remainder of this thesis in order to explore, discuss and explain how various models of SE may help to empower homeless people by enhancing their capabilities.

Conclusion

This chapter has developed a conceptual framework for the thesis. In so doing, it has demonstrated the links between the key concepts of power, empowerment, self-help and capabilities. It has argued that the notion of power underpins the key concept of empowerment and, therefore, explored debates relating to the outcome-based, process-led, individual and collective domains of empowerment. It has also highlighted other domains that cut across the outcome/process and individual/collective dichotomies of empowerment, these being 'economic', 'socio-psychological', 'educational, and 'political' in nature.

The link was then made between individual empowerment and the concept of self-help, which is viewed as people being self-reliant rather being dependent on the state. From this perspective, the term empowerment, thus, is mainly conceptualised as disadvantaged people taking more responsibility for themselves, echoing the

Conservative-led Coalition Government's 'Big Society' idea. However, the chapter has noted that existing empowerment literature fails to adequately capture vulnerable individuals' diversity, the uniqueness of each person, the differences in personal 'conversion' factors and the impact of context.

The capabilities framework proposed by Amartya Sen (1992), and further developed by Martha Nussbaum (2000), was thus proposed as a robust means of operationalising the concept of empowerment for use in this study. The capabilities approach focuses on the real opportunity to accomplish what we value and calls on us to bear in mind the context and diversity of human complexities in the conceptualisation of empowerment, and captures ends and means, thus ensuring that people are capable of attaining a 'well-lived' life. Moreover, the capabilities framework enriches traditional empowerment models and allows for a nuanced operationalisation of the 'physical' and the 'creative and intellectual' empowerment domains.

In the light of the range of complex issues that a homeless person experiences, the capabilities approach comprises a more balanced and comprehensive approach than classical empowerment models. The author has, thus, linked the classical empowerment dimensions with an adjusted capabilities list to provide the analytical framework. This capabilities-grounded empowerment framework is used in the remainder of this thesis in order to explore, discuss and explain how various models of SE may (or may not) help to empower homeless people by enhancing their capabilities.

Chapter 4: Research Design and Methodology

Introduction

This chapter explains how the research was undertaken. It opens with a discussion of the key research design, justifying the adoption of a qualitative and ‘realistic’ approach to evaluation. It then describes in detail why the interview method was chosen as the primary vehicle for data collection and provides a summary of the strengths and limitations of this approach. It then goes on to provide an overview of each stage of the fieldwork conducted for the study and a description of the sampling criteria used in order to select the SEs from which key informants and case study projects were drawn. In addition to the two stages of fieldwork described above, due to the highly limited research and statistical data available on single homeless people in Kazakhstan the author had to conduct brief consultative discussions with well-placed observers in Kazakhstan. The chapter concludes by outlining practical issues encountered and presents a number of reflections generated during the course of this fieldwork.

Research Design: A Qualitative Realistic Evaluation Approach

Some commentators note that research design is the process of translating a researcher’s original ideas and interests into a researchable process (Burgess, 1984; Hughes, 1997; McNeil, 2005). Designing a project involves making a number of strategic decisions and providing an overall framework for the research. The most fundamental question the researcher has to think about is whether to pursue qualitative or quantitative research (Robson, 2011). It should be stressed that “what is important for researchers is not the choice of a priori methodologies, but rather to be clear about what the purpose of the study is and to match that purpose with the attributes most likely to accomplish it” (Larson-Freeman and Long, 1991, p.14). Put another way, the methodological design should be determined by the research questions. In this PhD study the researcher has adopted a primarily qualitative methodology as this best enables answering the research questions and exploring the concepts outlined in earlier Chapters, both from the perspective of homeless people and those who work with them.

Every research design option brings advantages and limitations (Robson, 1993; Denscombe, 2003). Quantitative design refers to research which generates a large

amount of numerical data and usually seeks to establish causal relationships between variables, using statistical methods to test the strength and significance of the relationships (Burns and Grove, 2005; Given, 2008). One of the key advantages of the quantitative strategy is the fact that findings can be generalised and statistically represented. However, the weakness is that it lacks depth and detailed information.

Qualitative research design, on the other hand, is an approach that provides knowledge of how people behave and it enables researchers to explore people's experiences and the meanings they give to their actions as they develop over time (Burgess, 1984; Robson, 1993). The advantages of qualitative research are that it provides an opportunity to acquire in-depth information and identify the meaning behind conceptualisations of the terms and clarifications of points in the course of fieldwork. It is also defined as being a 'naturalistic' process (Robson, 1993). The researcher learns about participants from their perspectives (Rubin and Rubin, 1995). In other words, qualitative research enables us to capture unobservable phenomena such as people's thoughts, understanding, attitudes and interpretations (Burgess, 1984). Furthermore, it allows for the development of rapport between the interviewer and interviewee with face-to-face interaction between the researcher and respondent (Hall and Hall, 1996). Furthermore, the flexible nature of the qualitative approach allows unexpected factors and views encountered in the course fieldwork to be taken into account (Burgess, 1984). A weakness of qualitative techniques, however, is that the data collection is not standardised and thus the representativeness of selected samples may be difficult to generalise on statistical grounds (Fitzpatrick, 1997). That said, when using qualitative design one can extrapolate the findings on theoretical grounds (Burgess, 1984).

One of the key elements of this study, as noted in earlier chapters, is the evaluation of specific projects. There are two broad types of evaluation research: classical experimental evaluation and the 'realistic' approach. The first of these, experimental evaluation is a structured approach which attempts to hold most variables constant, in order "...to match to circumstances of experimental and control groups and seeks to discount in design and evidence precisely that which needs to be addressed in explanation" (Pawson and Tilley, 1997, p.31). This traditional evaluation approach aims to obtain reliability, a highly specified and intentionally inflexible methodology (Pawson and Tilley, 1997; Tilley, 2004). A major weakness of such traditional evaluation research is that it is data-driven and is based on a 'successionist'

conceptualisation of causation focused on empirical regularities wherein the main logic is that:

...being identical to begin with, the only difference between the experimental and control groups lie in the application of the initiative. Any difference in behavioural outcomes between the groups is thus accounted for in terms of the action of the treatment... causation is 'external' in that we do not and cannot observe certain causal forces at work (Pawson and Tilley, 1997, p.37).

Thus, experimental evaluation is grounded on "...the existence of program uniformities... to hypothesize or demonstrate the constant conjunction whereby X produces Y" (Tilley, 2004, p. 215).

In contrast to experimental methods, realistic evaluation is theory-driven which means that "...the theoretical postulates and conceptual structures under investigation are open for inspection in a way that allows the respondent to make informed and critical contribution to them" (ibid, p. 182). In realist evaluation the conceptualisation of causation focuses on 'what works for whom in what circumstances' (Pawson and Tilley, 1997, p.144). In so doing, a realistic evaluation proposes:

context + mechanism = outcome (CMO) formulation.

Within the CMO formulation, 'context' means an understanding of the various specific conditions necessary for triggering programme mechanisms, and the 'mechanism' captures a particular understanding of 'what it is about a programme' that brings about changes. In turn, these combinations of two elements "...increase specificity of 'outcome' pattern predictions according to context and mechanism triggered". In other words, "...programmes work (have a successful 'outcome') only in so far as they introduce the appropriate ideas and opportunities ('mechanisms') to groups in the appropriate social and cultural conditions ('contexts') (Pawson and Tilley, 1997, p. 57).

CMO is grounded on qualitative research methods and draws our attention to testing theories of how project outcomes "are generated by specific mechanisms and contexts, a task which involves making inter-and intra-project comparisons in order to see 'what works for whom in what circumstances'" (ibid., p. 220).

In the context of this thesis – where the main focus is finding out ‘what works for whom in what circumstances’ with respect to which (if any) SE models empower homeless people - a qualitative method of investigation grounded on Pawson and Tilley’s (1997) realist evaluation is highly appropriate, and is the approach employed.

In-depth Interviews: Data Collection and Analysis

There are a number of different qualitative research methods that one could employ including ‘in-depth interviews’ (face-to-face conversations using a topic guide), ‘focus groups’ (discussions amongst small groups of participants brought together with a moderator to focus on a specific topic with a topic guide) and ‘participant observation’ (a researcher (participant observer) studies the life of a group by sharing in its activities in their cultural environment in order to develop familiarity with their practices) (Robson, 1993; Crabtree and Miller, 1992). The main qualitative technique adopted in this thesis was in-depth interviews with both key informants and service users of SEs.

The advantages of in-depth interviews as opposed to other forms of qualitative techniques are that they: provide an opportunity for the researcher to obtain detailed biographical information from one person at a time; guarantee the confidentiality and privacy of the interviewee in order to enable us to ask about ‘sensitive’ points, which is difficult to achieve in a public context (Burgess, 1984); and allow researchers to employ “a range of probes and other techniques to achieve depth of answer in terms of penetration, exploration and explanation, and to use follow up questioning [to develop] a deeper and fuller understanding of the participant’s meaning” (Ritchie and Spencer, 1994, p.191).

I had initially planned to conduct focus group interviews with homeless people. The advantages of focus groups are that they allow the possibility that discussions between individuals will stimulate debates, new ideas, criticism or developments; also some people may feel more comfortable talking in a peer supported environment than they do in a one-to-one setting (Robson, 1993). However, a decision was made not to conduct focus groups, primarily because I am not a native English speaker and lack experience of facilitating focus groups with vulnerable people. It was felt that managing the group dynamic and obtaining quality data in such circumstances would be particularly challenging for me linguistically given the likelihood of encountering ‘strong accents’,

locally-specific ‘street language’, and the potential need to manage the contributions of ‘dominant’ characters. It was thus decided that in-depth interviews would be conducted on a one-to-one basis wherever possible. Significantly, in contrast to focus groups, in-depth interviews helped to generate more detailed information from interviewees and enabled capture of all participants’ views regardless of whether they had a passive or dominant personality.

A digital voice recorder was used in all of these semi-structured interviews, with interviewees’ permission. The question of whether it is better to use a digital recorder or manually note interview data is widely debated within the literature. Some writers who advocate note-taking criticise recording as it discourages listening, and claim that note-taking promotes rapport and demonstrates to respondents that their views are being taken seriously (Yin, 1989). However, note-taking can involve bias as a researcher might be selective about what to record (Hall and Hall, 1992). Also it is practical to use a digital recorder if a researcher conducts interviews in a foreign language as it helps to retrieve data provided during the course of fast-flowing conversation. Ideally, “note-taking and recording are used together, helping the researcher construct questions as the interview progresses and aiding later analysis by highlighting significant themes or issues” (Chambers et al., cited in Murray, 1999 p.78). The researcher therefore used both a digital recorder and took notes during the interviews.

The purposes and issues addressed in the interviews with key informants and service users are described in detail in the following section of this chapter. The specific topic guides used in all interviews are provided in Appendices A and B. Some further interview questions were added during the course of fieldwork to get further in-depth insight and views.

By way of analysis, the recorded interviews were fully transcribed, partly with the help of an English native speaker, partly by myself, and I carried out the data coding of the interviews data manually. I used a thematic coding approach with the interview transcripts and notes to separate and highlight themes and key concepts of this thesis. I ‘flagged’ the data using various codes (for example, ‘SPEM’ to refer to service providers’ interpretations of the concept of empowerment, ‘EMSH’ to indicate the link between the notions of ‘empowerment’ and ‘self-help’, and ‘SPSE’ to refer to service providers’ interpretations of the concept of social enterprise). Some recoding took place

as certain codes were adjusted during the course of the fieldwork and others introduced during the early stages of data analysis.

Qualitative software packages, such as NVIVO (computer-aided qualitative analysis software), were not used in this research as such packages were not available in the early period of the research in the Institute for Housing, Urban and Real Estate Research of the School of Built Environment. The software would have saved time and would have provided consistency. However, I found that manual rather than software coding was appropriate as there was a manageable amount of data. In turn, this allowed me to immerse myself in the data, which provided a detailed understanding of and familiarity with the data.

Fieldwork and Consultative Interviews

The fieldwork for the study was conducted in two main stages: stage one involved in-depth interviews with representatives' from SEs in the UK, and the second stage comprised a 'realistic' evaluation (see above) of four employment-focused SEs working with homeless people in the UK. In addition, a small number of consultative interviews were undertaken with observers in the homelessness sector in Kazakhstan. Each of these aspects of the study is described below.

Stage One: Key Informant Interviews

In the first stage, 22 in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with representatives of 16 UK-based SEs in the homelessness sector in Scotland and England (see Table 4.1). The purpose of these interviews was to explore SE representatives' understandings of the terms empowerment, self-help and social enterprise, and their viewpoints concerning the advantages and disadvantages of the SE employment model in the empowerment of homeless people. The topic guide used for these key informant interviews is attached in Appendix A.

At the beginning of the first stage of fieldwork, detailed criteria were drawn up for the selection of SEs, informed by the research questions outlined in Chapter 1. First, in order to be eligible for inclusion in the study, all potential organisations had to be a SE as defined in Chapter 2, which was used to capture a broad range of SEs working in the homelessness field. Secondly, the 'clients', or at least one of the key target groups, in all

organisations had to be homeless people or formerly homeless people, with homelessness broadly defined (see Chapter 2). Thirdly, all organisations had to be ‘employment’-based, training-focused or provide work experience for homeless people with the aim of facilitating their integration into the workplace by gaining income, job skills and experience (see Chapter 2). Fourth, sampling had to capture a variety of geographical locations within the UK in order to ensure a diverse labour market and homelessness contexts were represented. Finally, organisations had to be diverse in terms of ‘origin’ (with different years of establishment and a history which captured the scope, size, legal status, financial model, and the level of experience of a social enterprise).

As the author ensured interviewees of confidentiality, neither their names nor their organisations are identified, but their key roles and organisations’ characteristics are captured in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1 The SEs from which key informant interviewees were drawn

| | Organisation Description | Location | Number of Interviewed Respondents |
|---|---|----------|--|
| 1 | A large charitable organisation set up in 1990s which separately set up a SE arm in the mid-2000s. The ‘Parent’ organisation provides supported accommodation to former homeless people as well as a range of education, training, employment and health promotion services. The SE entirely focuses on business activities to generate income. | Scotland | 1 interview with Director |
| 2 | A locally-based charitable organisation set up in the mid-1970s provides accommodation, employment and training. The ‘Parent’ organisation established a SE project in the late 1990s. The SE arm provides employment, training and work experience for the homeless. | Scotland | 2 interviews: with Project Manager & Front Line Staff member |
| 3 | A large nation-wide housing association set up in the 1960s. Provides accommodation and other services such as employment training, and support and care for individuals. Has a separate business arm to generate income and support its social programmes. | Scotland | 2 interviews: with Director & Project Manager |
| 4 | A large charitable organisation established in the mid-1960s which set up a SE project in mid 2000 integrated into the organisation’s structure. The ‘Parent’ organisation provides employment, training, work experience and care for individuals. | Scotland | 1 interview with Director |

| | | | |
|----|---|-----------------|--|
| | The SE project runs a farm and food waste recycling business in which it trains and employs homeless people. | | |
| 5 | A small SE which provides training and work experience for homeless people. Set up in 2005. | Scotland | 1 interview with Project Manager |
| 6 | A locally-based charity established in the late-1990s. Its SE project was developed in the mid-2000s, integrated into the charity's structure which provides employment training for homeless people. | Scotland | 1 interview with Project Manager |
| 7 | A small SE set up in the late-1990s. Specialises in the provision of training and work experience for homeless people. | Scotland | 1 interview with Director |
| 8 | A locally-based charity established in the late-1990s. It has a SE project that provides training programme and work experience opportunity for homeless people. | Scotland | 2 interviews: with Director & Project Manager |
| 9 | A small SE set up in the mid-2000s. Provides training, support, employment and enterprise development consultancy. | England, London | 1 interview with Director |
| 10 | A large charity that supports homeless people with complex needs and helps homeless people to live in decent homes. Set up in the early 1990s. Encompasses a SE project set up in the mid-2000s which provides training for 'clients' to enhance their employment skills and an opportunity to acquire employment experience. | England, London | 1 interview with Director |
| 11 | A small SE which provides training and employment for homeless people. Set up in 2007. | England, London | 1 interview with Director |
| 12 | A large charity. Provides accommodation, employment and volunteering opportunities and training services for homeless people. Set up in the mid-1960s. This organisation supports a SE project established in the mid-2000s which provides work experience and training for homeless people. | England, London | 3 interviews: with one Project Director and two Project Managers |
| 13 | A small social enterprise. Founded in the late 1990s. Offers work experience and work-related training for homeless people. | England, London | 1 interview with Director |
| 14 | A large housing association. Set up in the 1980s. Provides housing. Supports the SE project within its structure which was developed in the mid-2000s. The SE employs homeless people and also provides training for them. | England, North | 1 interview with Director |
| 15 | A small social enterprise. Set up in the mid-2000s. Provides paid employment, training and work experience. | England, North | 2 interviews: with Director, Project Manager |
| 16 | A small SE set up in the mid- 2000s. Offers training and work experience for homeless people. | England, North | 1 interview with Director |

It should be noted that all 16 selected organisations met the above articulated criteria. As Table 4.1 exhibits, most organisations combined all three elements: recruiting homeless people into paid work; training and the provision of unpaid work experience

with emphasis on one of these or other aspects. Snowball sampling captured a variety of geographical locations within the UK in order to ensure SEs operating in diverse contexts were involved in the study. Table 4.1 shows that this involved homelessness SEs geographically located in seven different cities in the UK within two jurisdictions – Scotland and England in order to ensure a diverse labour market and homelessness contexts.

Stage Two: Case Studies

The second stage of fieldwork involved more detailed evaluations of four homelessness SE projects. There was a direct link between the first and second stage of fieldwork in terms of the selection of projects for detailed evaluation, as while undertaking the first visit field trip I also kept in mind the need to select case study organisations. Due to the limited PhD timeline for fieldwork and resources available, four projects were also considered to be the number which could be effectively evaluated and also these were enough to explain and capture the range of relevant key themes, patterns and experiences in order to answer the research questions of this study.

Within the second stage of fieldwork, similar to the first stage, detailed criteria were developed for the selection of SE projects, informed by the research questions outlined in Chapter 1. As in stage 1 of fieldwork, all four case studies had to be ‘employment’ based, in other words training-focused or provide work experience for homeless people and represent different ‘geographical’ locations and ‘origins’. Unlike the first stage of sampling criteria, however, in the second stage the researcher wished to capture a mix of both ‘embedded’ and ‘integrated’ SEs. The idea behind this criterion was to explore whether having an embedded or integrated types make a difference to the operation of SEs and/or their ability to empower homeless people. In the context of employment-based SE models, embedded SEs are ones in which the SE itself has been explicitly set up to employ homeless people; integrated SEs, on the other hand, comprise a business arm to accumulate finance to subsidise the organisation’s social programmes and/or operating expenses (for more information on integrated SEs see Chapter 2).

All four of the selected case study SE projects were assured of confidentiality, and are therefore described hereafter as Organisations A, B, C and D, as shown in Table 4.2 below.

Table 4. 2 Site visits to SE projects

| Title and Types of Social Enterprise | SE Model | Location | Number of Interviewed Staff Members | Number of Interviewed Homeless People |
|--------------------------------------|--|-----------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| Organisation A Integrated type | Employment, training & work experience | Scotland | 3 Interviews: with Director, Project Coordinator and Front Line Officer | 4 |
| Organisation B Embedded type | Employment, training & work experience | England, North | 4 Interviews: with Director, Strategy Development Manager, Partnership Manager and Front Line Officer | 8 |
| Organisation C Integrated type | Employment, training & work experience | England, London | 2 Interviews: with Director and Front Line Officer | 5 |
| Organisation D Embedded type | Employment, training & work experience | England, North | 2 Interviews: with Director and Front Line Officer | 6 |

The case study projects' degree of emphasis on either paid employment or the provision of unpaid work experience varied. For instance, the emphasis of Organisations A and C are on training and unpaid work experience, albeit that they also provide some opportunities for paid employment for homeless people. Organisations B and D, however, focus on all three aspects: employment, training and unpaid work experience.

Table 4.2 shows that the case study homelessness SEs were located geographically in 4 different cities in the UK within two jurisdictions, Scotland and England. Organisations B and D are embedded SEs, while Organisation A and C were integrated SEs (Table 4.2). During stage 2 of the fieldwork it was found that most of the embedded SEs set up by individuals were either very small-scale, where staff work part-time, or closed some time ago because of financial difficulties or lack of demand for their business.

The purpose of the interviews conducted at this stage was to explore the staff and service users' understanding of the term 'empowerment' and to examine how the SE model may, or may not, lead to the enhanced 'capabilities' and empowerment of homeless individuals. In the course of case study visits I tried to interview as many staff members as possible and involve all Project Directors and Front Line Officers. Overall 11 project staff members were interviewed (see Table 4.2). Conducting interviews with

staff at different levels of seniority enabled the principle of triangulation to be served within each project. This in turn enabled the study of SE employment projects' empowerment practice from a number of different viewpoints. The topic guides of case study interviews with staff members are attached in Appendix B.

The number of homeless people interviewed in each project comprised, in most cases, between four and eight individuals. I thus interviewed almost all of the homeless people involved in the projects within each case study organisation (see Table 4.2). In total, 23 homeless people were interviewed. All 23 service user research participants were male, and aged between 25-43 years old. None of the interviewees were in paid work, 16 were 'volunteering', and seven people were in 'training'. In total, 15 participants were involved with the case study SEs with a social emphasis and eight with the SE with a business emphasis. With regard to their accommodation status, 12 of the service users interviewed were living in hostels, three were living in friends' houses, and eight were staying in council flats. The topic guides of case study interviews with homeless people are attached in Appendix C. The researcher provided each homeless participant with Tesco Vouchers worth £15. This incentive was very significant too as a number of homeless people may not have got involved without this very minor reward.

Consultative Discussions with Observers in Homelessness Sector in Kazakhstan

In addition to the two stages of fieldwork described above, and due to the highly limited research and statistical data available on single homeless people in Kazakhstan I had to conduct brief consultative discussions with well-placed observers in Kazakhstan. These had not been planned at the initial stage of the research. I undertook seven discussions with consultees representing participants from local government, night shelters, journalists and homelessness charities and SEs which helped to contextualise the homelessness issue in Kazakhstan beyond my own personal observations and knowledge. The topic guides of consultative discussions with observers in Kazakhstan are attached in Appendix D.

Case Study Organisation Profiles

This section provides a profile of each of the four main UK case study organisations, together with details of the interviews carried out in each. Some specific information has been made less explicit in order to protect organisational anonymity.

Organisation A: Food Programme SE

Organisation A is large scale a charity which was established in the mid-1990s and it provides accommodation, training services and volunteering opportunity for homeless people. It is located in Scotland and legally registered as a charitable organisation. The organisation operates a food share SE project to self-sustain some parts of programmatic activities. This SE offers homeless people mainly unpaid work experience and training. According to the Director of the social enterprise, the project was set up because supermarkets were throwing food away which was still fit for purpose and could be used, and could address the needs of homeless people living on the street.

As the project director explained, homeless people who were not accessing healthy food and were not looking after themselves whilst supermarkets were throwing food away because of its expiry date or it was not the standard that they would want to sell. In turn, the project was devised to redistribute fresh food donated by supermarkets to homelessness projects in existing hostels, day centres, drop in centres, and night shelters. Organisation A operates as an integrated social enterprise, according to the typology outlined earlier (see Chapter 2).

The project has five staff members, of whom three are full-time salaried staff. These are the Director of Social Enterprise, the Manager, Deputy Manager, Trainer and Front Line Officer. During the case study visits the Director, The Manager and Front Line Officer were interviewed.

The project has five homeless volunteers. Four of these were interviewed during the course of the fieldwork; a fifth interview was cancelled because the interviewee did not turn up to work on the day it was scheduled.

Organisation B: SE Projects and Training Programme

Organisation B was set up in the mid-1990s and is located in North England. It is an embedded SE and legally registered as a CIC (see chapter 2). Its mission is to provide training and employment opportunities for people who have been homeless, marginalised or vulnerable and is based on ethos to “...help those who want a hand up, not a hand out” (Senior Project Manager, 2012). This SE provides homeless people training, unpaid work experience as well as paid employment to certain extent. However, the training component operates through Organisation B’s training programme which was set up two years after the establishment of the organisation.

Employment opportunities for the organisation’s homeless and ex-homeless people are accomplished through outside catering, a cafe business, warehousing and delivery. It also holds the franchise for the FareShare Programme in the area which is a food redistribution programme, similar to Organisation A, which provides surplus food from producers and retailers to other projects. It is believed that people working in this part of the operation learn warehousing, distribution and stock control skills, as well as customer service skills.

It also offers a training programme which provides three months job training with the additional support in job seeking. Trainees are expected to participate two or three days a week, in practice working in one of above mentioned organisation’s businesses (Senior Project Manager, 2012).

There are 12 full-time staff members in the organisation. Nine of them work in the SE project – the Director, Deputy Director, Strategic Development Manager and the Partnership Manager, two administrative staff (a lawyer and an accountant), the Chef in the kitchen, one Café Business Manager, one Warehouse Administrator, while three staff members such as the Project Manager, Project Manager Assistant and Trainer are engaged in activities of the training academy. The Trainer is a front line officer who directly works with ex-homeless trainees.

There were three visits to organisation B in total. The initial visit took place within the first stage of the field visit when the founder was interviewed. The second involved a visit to the training programme. The third visit was arranged to interview staff members involved in the SE project itself.

In total, as result of the three site visits, five interviews were conducted, namely with the Director, Deputy Director, Strategy Development Manager, Partnership Manager and Front Line Officer. When it comes to service users' interviews, at the time of the researcher's visit there were three homeless people working full-time (unpaid) in the main project and five homeless people who were participating in the training programme. All of them took part in in-depth interviews, thus eight homeless people were interviewed in total.

Organisation C: Bike Repair SE

Organisation C is a large scale charity with the ultimate goal of tackling street homelessness. It specialises in helping people with complex and multiple needs, including mental health issues, drug and alcohol problems. It provides accommodation, health and training services and volunteering opportunities for homeless people. It was set up in the early 1970s and is located in England. It is legally registered as a charity. Its 'parent' charity has more than 60 staff members in total.

This 'parent' organisation set up a SE with legal CIC status in the mid-2000s which provides a services bike repairing service. This SE is run by volunteer homeless people who carry out bike repairing services and it provides training courses aimed at developing bike maintenance skills. It offers homeless people unpaid work experience and training.

The researcher conducted two-tier interviews: firstly with the employment and training team of the 'parent' charity; and secondly with the employment and training team who oversee the mentoring and coaching of the social enterprise. There are two full-time staff members within employment and the training team of the 'parent' origination, including the Director and Front Line Officer, and both were interviewed.

Five ex-homeless people involved with the SE were interviewed during the course of the fieldwork. One of these was ex-homeless and the founder of this social enterprise; the other four volunteers were involved in cycle repairing. It should be noted that there is no fixed number of volunteer workers, yet as the head of this enterprise notes, it usually ranges from four to six.

Organisation D: Painting and Decorating Business

Organisation D was set up by its large scale ‘parent’ housing association in early 2000s. Its legal status is CIC. Unlike the above noted case study where a SE project was established by a ‘parent’ organisation, it is classified as an embedded type of social enterprise, as the Director of the SE believed that they are a stand-alone organisation from the ‘parent’ charity, given the separate legal status, financial independence and business viability of the project. This SE delivers painting and decorating business activities.

It offers unpaid work experience and training for homeless people and assumes that its SE approach is a positive way of empowering its homeless group clients, namely through enhancing their employability.

It delivers a six-week painting and decorating training course for homeless people. The course is designed for people to develop skills in painting and decorating and it also offers training in preparation, papering, health and safety. Additionally, it captures a ‘multi-occupation’ four-week-course on woodwork and handyperson skills including fitting locks, curtain rails and skirting boards and learning to use hand and power tools safely and effectively.

There are three full-time staff members and the researcher conducted two interviews with the Director and Front Line Officer. There are usually from five to ten homeless people working as volunteers. At the time of the researcher’s visit, six homeless people were working for the SE and all of them were interviewed during the course of the case study visits.

The next section outlines practical issues encountered and reflections during the course of this fieldwork.

Reflections on Fieldwork: Challenges and Experiences

This section reflects on key challenges encountered during the fieldwork process. In so doing, it covers linguistic challenges facing a non-native speaker; and then moves on to the ‘interviewer effect’, reflections on approaching ‘sensitive’ questions and, finally, the interview strategy used during the course of this fieldwork.

It is widely acknowledged that conducting research involving vulnerable groups presents particular challenges (Liamputong, 2007). However, most commentators fail to mention the linguistic challenges for someone who is a non-native speaker and who is communicating with potential participants and conducting interviews in their second language. The style of English, for example, can influence the perception of an email addressee regarding whether to accept and respond to a message positively. From experience, it has been noted that the usual way in which native English speakers communicate through electronic mail correspondence is different compared to that of a non-native speaker. My first language is Russian and therefore email texts composed by myself were thoroughly proof-read by an English native speaker then forwarded to several SEs. Then this original text which explains who the researcher is and why there is a need to interview with an attached PhD information sheet was forwarded to addressees. Within the initial two weeks there were very few replies. However, the situation improved enormously once my English style was modified by my supervisors, and Prof. Suzanne Fitzpatrick suggested that I include her name with contact details in the email as a contact person too. This has provided 'legitimacy' to my email. Once these changes were made I started to receive replies to emails considerably quicker, with mostly supportive replies, and whilst some still refused to be interviewed they replied much faster than before.

Secondly, during the interview process, in a few cases, I experienced problems, a sort of 'interviewer effect' when project leaders were trying to provide socially correct answers and to emphasise their project's 'success stories'. In such cases I often intervened during the interviews noting that the points they made were interesting and that it was relevant to my following question. In doing so, I tried to link it to the relevant parts of research topic guide and to shift to the main interview questions. Put another way, I tried to use this challenging point in a positive way, namely, when possible, to link it to interview questions by keeping a natural tone of conversation. On the whole these techniques worked well. Periodically this even helped me shift to a more 'sensitive' question that I had reserved towards the end of the interview.

I also found that when one is able to link 'sensitive' questions directly or indirectly to interviewees' points expressed during the conversation it creates a condition as if this question was raised by the respondent himself/herself and he/she feels more comfortable in addressing them. In turn, this improved the openness of the conversation

enormously and provided richer data. However, this is mostly relevant to project leaders, as I noticed that homeless people tend to be mostly open and say what they think and speak freely if the right venue was secured, anonymity ensured and the fact that no one else would have access to recordings was explained.

Finally, from my experience, I found it useful to divide the interview strategy into three parts: firstly, an informal ‘pre-interview’ stage which starts immediately upon arrival at the office. I tried to use any spare time to talk to project staff or homeless people about very general areas. For instance, when I met project managers I asked them to talk about their projects, with homeless people I asked them what his/her name was, how long they had worked in the project, and where they worked before, prior to embarking on the main formal interview stage. Later, this helped me save time during the ‘formal’ interview time and importantly allowed me to establish some degree of rapport with interviewees. However, it was not always possible to employ this approach in all cases which was mostly dependent on a time gap before the start of the main interview itself.

Secondly, I moved on to the ‘formal’ part of the interview, which usually took place at an arranged time and in an allocated venue. Thirdly, the ‘post-interview’ phase began after the recorder was switched off. I usually asked if there was anything I should have asked and in several cases I noticed that interviewees were more open and flexible in the ‘post-interview’ stage. Thus, this showed that despite ensuring anonymity, a few respondents experienced a ‘recorder effect’. Occasionally, once the interview was over, the interviewee and I usually went to the kitchen and I was either offered a coffee or tea or we went to wash up used cups during which I pursued the conversation to clarify points that were raised during the interview further or let respondents talk about any issues he or she wanted to. I found the ‘post-interview’ stage as equally fruitful as its formal counterpart as it enhanced the quality of information in a number of cases.

In terms of the reflections noted, I feel that in most ways the fieldwork process went well and that the selection of the in-depth interview method rather than the focus group was the right decision to make. I would also perhaps stress the value of a “post-interview cup of tea” stage in a relaxed context to enrich the interview data in the PhD fieldwork visits. In retrospect, however, if I would do this research again, I would probably ensure from the outset that the ‘communications portfolio’ was in place prior to contacting the potential key informants. In other words, I might not have

communicated with selected organisations to ask for interviews until my emails had been checked by supervisors for linguistic cultural nuances of the email content composed to establish first contact and gain access to respondents during the early stages of the fieldwork.

Conclusion

This chapter has explained and justified the research methodology employed in this thesis. As explained, because of the nature of the research questions a qualitative methodology was deemed appropriate and within that an in-depth interview method was selected as it enables the exploration of related concepts discussed in earlier Chapters from the perspective of homeless people and those who work with them. For case studies fieldwork Pawson and Tilley's (2002) critical realist approach was deemed most appropriate as it offers a conceptualisation of causation that focuses on the question 'what works for whom in what circumstances?' A realistic framework helps to find out what is known and what is not known about what brings about the empowerment of homeless people which is grounded in a qualitative method of investigation.

This chapter also described the two fieldwork stages: first, in-depth interviews with representatives' from SEs in the UK; and second, detailed evaluations of four employment focused SEs in the UK in order to capture the holistic view of both key informants and homeless people. There were several sampling criteria and one of the main ones was that all organisations selected had to provide employment, training or work experience opportunities for homeless people which fits the main research question of the thesis. The agencies selected represented different geographical locations, and organisational origins, in order to cover various labour markets and homelessness contexts. This diversity was ensured to enable exploration of how the SE approach might empower homeless people in different contexts.

Finally, this chapter discussed some of the challenges of this field research such as gaining access to respondents which involved communication issues, most notably those relating to the 'style' of communication and its influence on access to interviewees. This was overcome with support from my supervisors and the development of a full 'professional' correspondence portfolio. This chapter also noted the pre-interview, formal interview and post-interview stages held equal significance in

the data collection phase. The combination of data collected in all three, it was argued, facilitated the acquisition of richer data.

Part Two: The UK Experience

Chapter 5: Operationalising Social Enterprise, Self-Help and Empowerment in the UK Homelessness Sector

Introduction

As discussed in Part One of this thesis, successive UK Governments have advocated SE as an innovative and sustainable tool for transforming disadvantaged people's lives. An attempt to 'fix' this ideologically was also accompanied by the adoption of the SE CIC law in 2005 by the New Labour government 1997-2010 (DTI, 2002; Social Enterprise Coalition, 2009; Teasdale, 2012b). More specifically, there has been focus on supporting and encouraging employment-centred SEs working with homeless people, which have been suggested by some as a new and more effective approach than traditional charity organisations. Interest in the SE model has further expanded under the current UK Coalition Government, in parallel with the growing emphasis on linking concepts of 'empowerment' and 'self-help' to the Conservative-led Government's notion of the 'Big Society' (Pattie and Johnston, 2011; Teasdale et al, 2012).

This chapter investigates how the concepts of SE, self-help and empowerment are operationalised by key participants in the homelessness field in the UK. It uses empirical data gathered from 22 interviews with key informants in England and Scotland from across 16 homelessness SEs in total, and from more in-depth interviews conducted with 11 service providers in four case study employment-focused SEs (see chapter 4 for methodological details). This chapter explores the following questions:

- How is the concept of *social enterprise* defined and operationalised in the UK homelessness sector?
- To what extent is the concept of *self-help* embedded in UK SE models in this field?
- How, if at all, is the concept of *empowerment* understood by those operating SEs in this field in the UK?

The research questions were focussed solely on employment-focussed SEs in the homelessness field in the UK.

How is *Social Enterprise* Defined and Operationalised?

This section explores the on the ground reality of SE in the UK. It indicates that there is a greater complexity than is perhaps suggested by the DTI's (2002) 'official definition'. Specifically, it reveals that respondents' interpretation and operationalisation of this concept are divided into two groups: those with '*a business emphasis*', which associates a SE as being closer to a commercial company, and those with '*a social emphasis*' which perceives the identity of SE as akin to the wider voluntary sector. For service providers this distinction between social and business focused SEs was far more relevant than whether these SEs were embedded or integrated SE models, as discussed in Chapter 2 (see Alter, 2007; Teasdale, 2012a). Meanwhile, the 'social innovation school' identified earlier in the literature which focuses on individual leaders as 'innovators', did not have any purchase amongst SE in the homelessness field (see chapter 2).

'Official Definition'

As noted in Chapter 2, the DTI suggested its definition of a SE which can be paraphrased thus: a business with a social mission whose overall aim is to re-invest earned profit back into social objectives (DTI, 2002). This was reflected in some on-the-ground views. For instance, an officer from a SE in Scotland noted that a SE is intended to "*...to serve a social purpose and to be self-financing*". Similarly, senior staff of a SE in North England noted that SE "*...works to recycle money which has the potential to benefit the implementation of social purposes*". The senior manager of a SE in Scotland explained: "*...I think it's a business that exists for a social purpose*". Project staff of a SE in London suggested that: "*...it trades for a social purpose, it aims to be profitable. And.....may not distribute its profits to individuals... you know, for private gain*".

However, in a number of cases participants suggested that the DTI definition was ambiguous and/or weak. According to a senior manager of a SE in London: "*...the Government's taken up the idea of social enterprise quite genuinely in the U.K., although it has no idea what it is*". As discussed in Chapter 2, Teasdale (2012a) casts doubt on the purely commercial capacity of work-based SEs in the homelessness sector in the UK to generate surplus and challenges the DTI (2002) definition. Generally, the interviewees confirmed Teasdale's (2012a) point. One participant from a SE from

London noted that a SE's *"surplus generation is not accumulated only by profit-seeking behaviour similar to that of commercial companies"* and explained that SEs in the homelessness sector also generate income from grant funding, donations and charity funding. In this sense SEs might employ a cost-transfer strategy from more than one source (Teasdale, 2012a). A SE staff member from the North of England emphasised that their organisation also accumulates *"...surpluses through contracts..."* as well as *"...attempting to work in a very business-like way."* The senior manager from the SE in the North of England stressed:

"I don't think.... I mean, clearly there are social enterprises that are 100% supported by income generation but with the complex needs of our clients and the funding environment that's out there, it's unrealistic to have that view and what you need to do is try.... try to find a balance between the amount of fund raising, the amount of grant that you can identify to support it and the amount of income generation you can achieve as well. So it's finding a balance".

The next point worth noting is, as discussed in the literature review, in 2005 the UK government, while developing its landmark changes within the SE landscape, also introduced the SE CIC law, the underlying idea of which was to differentiate it in an ideological sense from traditional voluntary organisations (Malik, 2008; SE Coalition, 2009; Nicholls, 2011; Teasdale, 2012b). This was partly confirmed during interviews with key informants. Some SEs with a business emphasis implied that the CIC law enabled them to operate more like the businesses rather than charitable bodies. One participant, a senior manager from the North England, made it very clear that he conceptualised SE through the lens of CIC status. This interviewee pointed out that CIC status enables the sidestepping of many charitable law restrictions and also noted that *"CIC allows private ownership of the company"*. The interviewee from the North of England explained that his organisation had a CIC status but it was also a company limited by shares in which each of the Board members has a share:

"...it's set up essentially as a commercial company but with the CIC status and that it's owned by the founders and the Board members all have a share".

Then the interviewee continued by pointing out that: “... *you know, the investors in essence, not all of the investors but the majority of the investors, actually control the business*”. A dividend cap which limits the material interests of capital investors (Malik, 2008) is still in place, yet as a staff member of a SE with a business focus he noted that: “...*the employees can take money out as wages*”. This example suggests that some Board members who are also SE employees could get round restrictions on dividends to a certain extent by taking them as wages instead.

However, it was also reported in the literature that the central quality and main difference between a SE with CIC and a commercial company is its ‘asset lock’ (Malik, 2008). As noted in Chapter 2, the asset lock is a general term used to cover all the provisions designed “*to ensure that the assets of the CIC are used for the benefit of the community*” (CIC, 2006). The main principle of asset lock is that it legally prohibits CICs from distributing their assets (or profits) to their members and if a SE went bankrupt the assets would be used for the benefit of the local community (Malik, 2008). However, this fieldwork partly challenges the feasibility of this. A project staff member from a SE with a legal CIC status pointed out that:

“...theoretically, there is asset lock.... although if you look at our balance sheet we don’t actually own any assets. All our buildings are leased and increasingly our equipment’s leased as well. So the amount of capital actually tied up in the business is quite small, so the asset lock doesn’t really affect us but it is there, theoretically”.

The fieldwork suggested that in some SEs with a business focus, although a *de jure* ‘asset lock’ can be in place as one of the criteria of SEs, the *de facto* leasing system ‘allows’ SEs to make it less workable. As a consequence, a legally registered CIC SE with a business emphasis owned predominantly by private founders may operate much like a commercial business because it uses a leasing scheme to avoid being subject to an asset lock. Such circumstances might ‘push’ those CIC SEs which use a leasing system for organisations’ owned equity closer to commercial firms.

Social Enterprise: ‘The Business Emphasis’

While the consideration of an ‘official definition’ was the starting point for the author’s investigations, significantly, the research suggested that some SEs, if they were

established by the predominantly private capital of the founder, then a business emphasis prevailed in the project and it operated more like a commercial enterprise. Three of the SEs the author had contact with fell into the category of business oriented SEs. For instance, senior project staff of a SE with a business orientation articulated this understanding of what SE is “*a social enterprise is a business, a proper money-making business or breaking even, a business that operates in the business world in the normal manner*”. In a similar vein, a member of project staff from London hoped that their organisation aims “*...to be profitable. You’ve got to have the focus on making money and then doing the social objectives*”. The senior manager of yet another SE emphasised that their SE seeks to make a profit and it differs from traditional charities in that the project aims towards capital growth. For this reason the profits go back into the business and as the interviewee provided an analogy from the commercial sector “*...we expand like any other business. Morrison’s, The Body Shop, MacDonald’s, that’s the way we see ourselves...*”

A project staff member from North England, likewise, stressed “*...you’ve got to have the focus on making money and then doing the charitable objectives*”. The senior manager of another SE added that the project operates in a manner so that “*...the more successful we are at the catering side the more opportunity we can do for the training...*” This views echo the USA approach of the ‘social enterprise school’ identified in the literature, in which the application of business ethos (Teasdale, 2010b), practices and efficiency is the main quality of SE (Defourny and Nyssens, 2010; Kerlin, 2006; Mair and Marti, 2006; Dees, 2007; Stevens et al., 2009; Young, 2010).

Many interviewees tried to explain why they adopted a business-orientation. There is broadly a similar vision to explain the rationale behind moving towards income-generating projects. As discussed in Chapter 2, the literature suggested that because of government financing shortages and funding cuts, not-for-profit organisations are forced to seek alternative resources (Dees, 1998; Mort et al., 2003; Kerlin, 2006; Teasdale, 2010c; 2012a). It is conceived, according to one SE senior project manager, as an attempt to be resilient “*against the current period of funding cuts*” and seek an additional source of income in the wider market.

Respondents provided further clarification on this subject. SE senior staff noted that a business emphasis “*...attracts more people to the Board of the organisation...*” which

helps to obtain more flexible risk-taking business-investment decisions and avoid “...*bureaucratic requirements*”. The main underpinning idea behind the operationalisation of the SE in such a manner was that it provides “*financial independence*”, thus the sustainability of the project. This interviewee’s point reflects to a certain extent the USA social enterprise school which advocates SEs with a business emphasis and surplus generation via power of marketplace (Dees, 1998). This also partly mirrors the DTI term of SE which proposes that SE is to be financially independent from grants (DTI, 2002; Smallbone and Lyon, 2005; Social Enterprise Coalition, 2009; Social Enterprise Mark, 2010).

Linked with this, one officer of a SE in North England believed that employment-based SEs’ financial independence allowed for the staff members to concentrate on working intensively, and in a personalised way, with their services, whilst large scale grant-funded charitable organisations often have to show quantitative targets in their reports (Aiken and Bode, 2009) as: “...*large organisations and contracted organisations are audited but they are audited on paperwork, not people*”. The interviewee then provided an example:

“ a specific contract could be ‘You need to get 100 people out of 200 people back to work’ and all you would see was 100 outcomes. 100 letters of employment but actually what difference has it made to those people’s lives. That’s..... you can’t..... you know, that’s invaluable. But a lot of government-funded training schemes don’t look at the bigger picture with people which I think is..... Which is why we’re very different, again”.

Within this 'business orientated' camp, however, there is a sub-theme to note. Some interviewees, who proposed the conceptualisation of SE primarily from an economic point of view, explicitly articulated the challenges that one might encounter in making this vision a reality, i.e. in generating income by selling a product on the commercial market. For one project staff member of SE, SEs are “...*businesses analogous to any other business and therefore they face the same market risks as other businesses*”. For this interviewee “... *they have customers to serve ... and like most businesses, raising finance to build the business is probably the biggest hurdle*”. It should be noted that competing with commercial companies and maintaining a high enough quality of product when the project employs disadvantaged people were listed as major

challenges. As one staff member of a SE from North England, who was responsible for the organisation's commercial interests, explained:

"...you want to do nice things for homeless people, but actually one has got to run a business. You've got to think through what your market is. You've got to think through what the competition is; you've got to have a proper business plan and be able to run it as an economic entity..."

Similarly project staff in another SE with a business orientation stated that:

"... actually the social benefit is probably only half of what we do. You know, part of what we do. It's a much more professional business, based around a very professional business model, trading in a sector which is not a traditional social care thing at all. You know, catering is nothing to do with most of the social enterprises that are set up. And the social benefit is achieved in other ways while trading through that business".

In other words, SEs with a business emphasis argue that SEs realise their financial sustainability through a business-oriented model which is, then, reinvested back in the social programme. However, the reality in terms of the limited 'profitability' of even business-orientated SEs could belie these ambitions. In practice, as Teasdale (2012, p. 531) noted earlier, work-focussed SEs in the homelessness sector "blend the legitimacy of third sector organisations with the legitimacy of private firms through balancing the institutional logics of both" and mainly generate income from various sources. The senior staff member from the SE in the North England believed that *"...undoubtedly the main criterion of social enterprise is its financial viability"*, yet the income stream could be sourced *"variously and from different sectors."* Additionally, one should note how SEs transfer the costs from state resources. For Teasdale (2012, p. 528) if some SEs focusing on the employment approach in the homelessness sector:

"...had paid homeless people at the minimum wage, the housing benefit they received would have been reduced, so withdrawing a key

financial element of their business plan. At the same time, the SE would have increased the costs necessary to sustain themselves.”

This present study confirmed this point. For instance, SEs with business emphasis organised training courses and the provision of a work experience in such a way as to avoid jeopardising the state benefits of their homeless service users. For example, in one case the service provider explained that the course was: *‘... four weeks in length, three days a week, fifteen hours a week, so in total sixty hours of learning...’*. They went on to clarify that: *“...you’re only allowed to do 15 hours of training a week and still claim benefits. If you do anything more they take your benefits off you.”*

Generally, all four case study employment-focused SEs used a cost transfer strategy from state resources, including SEs with a business emphasis (there was not enough detailed information on the other key informant SEs).

Social Enterprise: ‘The Social Emphasis’

In contrast to those SEs discussed above, the SEs that evolved from existing charities, emphasised social aims and remained more akin to traditional charitable or voluntary organisations. Ten of the SEs the author had contact with fell into the category of social-focussed SEs. For example, staff members in one SE with a social focus maintained that a SE operates in the business world in a manner that has *“...an eye on improving the situation of homeless individuals who noted that we do take people’s values to work, from previous lives, into consideration.”* Another SE project manager from London perceived that a SE’s central quality in the homelessness context is to create an innovative element in businesses *“...tailored to people at all different stages of social vulnerability and development”*. This is, largely, consistent with the European term ‘SE’ which primarily focuses on a social emphasis (Teasdale, 2010b).

However, these interviewees, in contrast to the existing literature, specifically referred to a project’s origin as one of the defining features of SEs. All of the SEs with a social focus had originally started off as charities. One SE senior staff member stressed that an enterprise can be conceptualised as a social business if it evolved from charitable ‘origins’, going on to say that:

“...the danger is you have some unscrupulous businessmen who see it as a social enterprise but actually it has no social arch, no social gain or no

social benefit ... for me, it does have to have some sort of social aspect, some charitable aspects...”

The project staff of SEs with social focus, which initially originated from charity social programmes, said that *“we want them to carry on with the work done by the parent charity and a social enterprise was the natural way of doing that”*. Additionally, the project officer of another SE noted that in fact a SE is *“a self-sustaining charity”*.

Interviewees stressed that SEs, including those registered as CIC, had evolved from charities. The senior project manager of one SE from London, established as CIC, explained the link between the charity and the SE thus:

“...the parent charity provided financial support to purchase all necessary tools, workstands, office furniture and a computer. An empty space in the building is provided for free”.

As earlier noted, the DTI's (2002) 'official definition' suggests that SEs are set up to generate income to be reinvested in the pursuit of social objectives, but in practice some of the SE cases involved in this study are supported by charitable agencies and subsidies that in fact go in the opposite direction: here it is the charity that supports the SE (see also Teasdale, 2012a). A senior staff member in a SE with a social focus maintained that SE is:

“...a generic term for businesses for the good of the people that are involved... they're charitable in some senses. I mean, we are pumping money into them from fund-raising”.

Thus, this means that the historical origins of SE can be in charities, and SEs can receive charitable support, sometimes only on a transitory basis, in the hope that they will become profitable eventually.

In contrast to the SEs discussed above, there was a subset of the 'social emphasis' group, charitable agencies which attempted to re-brand themselves with a SE image which was advantageous for a certain reason. As noted in Chapter 2, Teasdale (2010c) describes this as the 'organisational impression management' (IOM) approach. OIM is a deliberately developed strategy which is used to create a certain organisational image and perception amongst an external audience in order to accumulate resources from

different stakeholders (Bolino et al, 2008 cited in Teasdale, 2010c). In other words, these organisations use the IOM approach to rhetorically self-identify themselves as SEs “to access a wider range of funders than other third sector organisations” (Teasdale, 2010c, p. 287). For Johnsen (2012) this is a ‘public rebranding’ where organisations ‘play out’ or ‘play down’ certain historical characteristics depending on their audience. There were three SE representatives who identified their projects from an IOM perspective (Teasdale, 2010c).

For instance, a project staff member in one SE believed that SE is part of a charity project and that “...*the social enterprise aspect is purely the financial running of the programme*” and they also referred to the present economic climate:

“...it is necessary when you go to the funder to show that you are doing something to help raise money yourself, and if you were not operating as a social enterprise which runs your charitable business but actually makes a profit from it, then they would not look favourably upon your application”.

In line with this, a senior project staff member of a SE noted “*Saying we’re a social enterprise gets people interested and partly at the moment that’s for the purely administrative reason; in terms of a lot of bidding for funding...*” Similarly, an interviewee from a SE in London also pointed out in this regard: “*to tick ‘social enterprise’ on a funding bid is a positive, it’s generally seen as a positive. So we get lots of approaches*”.

Another participant from the North of England suggested that an element of OIM might also be directed to wider market ‘players’ in order to be ‘taken seriously’ for business deals with suppliers, by tenderers and customers:

“So being a social enterprise..... Sometimes I play on the fact that we’re involved heavily with the parent charity and that we are a charity, social enterprisey, type thing. Other times I don’t say that. Some people are though, “Oh, charity? Social enterprise? Brilliant!” And other people go, “Homeless people? On my premises? No thank you.” So there’s a, there’s a judgement..... It’s a bit naughty. Sometimes I play on it, sometimes I don’t but on the whole having your own identity as this social enterprise, this business, allows you to be taken seriously by people who you’re trying

to work with, by suppliers, by tenderers, you know, people who are offering work out, people you're trying to get work from, people..... you know, those kinds of bits and pieces, treated sort of with respect and allows you to operate in a business world".

The point regarding being 'taken seriously' was also expressed during the course of interview with a senior staff member of a SE in Scotland who noted that:

"I think that us being a social enterprise and a business allows us to operate in the real world. It is as a business in a proper manner and therefore you're automatically sort of taken more seriously, treated with a bit more respect. If you go in as a charity everyone's like, "You're not business. You're not professional..."

Thus, OIM can sometimes be used by organisations to 'legitimise' their services in the market. As discussed in Chapter 2, the OIM process, however, is described as a two-way process of negotiation where external resource holders are not passive recipients and the commissioners also prefer to be positioned as active 'collaborators' with SEs, preferably with more successful ones (Teasdale, 2010c).

However, 'managing' organisational identity and the fact there are various conceptualisations of SE can partly be explained by the deliberately loosely-defined term provided by the DTI definition (Teasdale, 2012b). The project staff of a SE in the North England commented that: "...all of those different roles are banded together as 'social enterprise' because I think they're actually probably four or five different things".

Summary of the definition and operationalisation of social enterprise

In summary, this section has shown that the conceptualisation and operationalisation of the concept of social enterprise 'on the ground' in the homelessness field is more complex than the DTI 'official' definition implies. Most fundamentally that some SEs, if they were established mainly using the private capital of the founder, then business emphasis tended to prevail in the project and it operated more like a commercial enterprise. On the other hand, some SEs evolved from charities, emphasised their social aims and were more akin to traditional voluntary organisations.

In terms of the case study SE organisations looked at in depth in the second stage of the fieldwork (see Chapter 4), one could be classified as 'business orientated' and the other three had a 'social emphasis'. This has important implications for the findings in relation to service users' experiences, discussed in Chapter 6. For now, one point worth noting is that, interestingly, these SEs with a business and social emphasis may similarly take a CIC legal form. This partly challenges the UK New Labour government's (1997-2010) attempt to ideologically differentiate SEs from traditional organisations through the introduction of CIC law. Furthermore, a SE with a business emphasis owned predominantly by private founders may operate much like a commercial business because it uses a leasing scheme to avoid being subject to asset lock. Even though a dividend cap of CIC which limits the material interests of capital investors is still in place, the employees can take money out as wages. Such circumstances might 'push' those CIC SEs with a business focus closer to commercial companies.

There were SEs which identified their projects as having neither a business nor social focus but rather from the 'OIM aspect which prioritised the 'impact' of external factors, namely the promotion of the SE concept by successive governments and consequently by a range of funding commissioners. In these cases, the concept of SE was something which was more linked to external communication with funders and partners rather than with a particular approach to the services provided to homeless people. The research suggested that an element of OIM might also be directed to wider market 'players' in order to 'legitimise' some commercial deals with suppliers, tenderers and customers.

As noted in Chapter 2, the DTI definition suggests that SEs are set up to generate income to be principally reinvested in the pursuit of social objectives, but in practice many SEs did not earn surplus through trading but rather used a cost-transfer strategy from various sources, including state resources via the benefits system for disadvantaged people (see also Teasdale, 2012a). In other words, there are several points to note with respect to SEs' financial capacity: a) ideally, a SE might make enough trading income to entirely sustain its own activities and cross-subsidise a charitable arm/organisation; b) some SEs might make enough financial resources via trading income to entirely sustain their own activities, but only just enough to 'break even' so there was no surplus 'profit' to invest in charitable programmes; c) SEs might make some trading income, but this was only enough to cover part of their operational costs, and so the SEs needed some subsidy to invest in social programmes (the cost

transfer model); d) Some emerging SEs make no trading income (so required all costs to be met via cost transfer). The majority of SEs in this study, involving SEs with both business and social orientations, were in c) whilst one SE with a social focus was in d).

Thus, these SEs are in fact quite hybrid in financial nature. Furthermore, the research suggested that, in contrast to the DTI (2002) concept of a SE, the charitable arm of organisations quite often cross-subsidised the SEs involved in the study. Importantly, these points confirm the findings of previous research on this subject in the literature (again see Teasdale, 2012a).

Finally, it should be noted that the service providers' conceptualisation of their SEs also showed that Alter's (2006) embedded versus integrated SE typologies described in Chapter 2, turned out to be not as significant as it was assumed. Rather, in practice the key division amongst employment-focused SE in the homelessness field in the UK was revealed to be between those who understood SE predominantly from a business point of view versus those who viewed it mainly from a social perspective. Similarly, the 'social innovation school' identified earlier in the literature which focuses on individual leaders as 'innovators', did not have any purchase amongst SE in the homelessness field (see chapter 2).

This study, as noted earlier, focussed on SEs in the homelessness field specifically aimed at employing and training or providing work experience to homeless people, which might identify the parameters of the presented findings.

Self-help and Social Enterprise

The existing literature has suggested that interest in the SE model has further expanded under the current UK Coalition Government elected in 2010, in parallel with a growing emphasis on 'self-help', linked to the Conservative-led Coalition Government's notion of the 'Big Society' (Pattie and Johnston, 2011; Kisby, 2010). This present research indicated that there are broadly two ways of operationalising self-help amongst SE practitioners in the homelessness field in the UK: *self-help as enhancing collective learning* and *self-help as enhancing individual responsibility and self-reliance*.

Self-help as Enhancing Collective Learning

All of the SEs in this section were socially-focussed SEs. As noted in Chapter 3, some writers have highlighted the importance of strengthening social networks, and collective learning, within the concept of 'self-help' (Barnes and Walker, 1997; Burns and Taylor, 1998). This notion was reflected in my fieldwork with, for example, a senior member of staff in a SE in London repeatedly noting that self-help took place informally amongst service-users. Staff there aimed to develop lateral “...relationships between project staff and homeless people...” and “...network[ing] amongst homeless people themselves...”. This interviewee referred to the experience of an informal group set up by their project:

“The core group’s probably about 25 – they meet together to give each other support; so they find things to do together. They go to the theatre. They cook food together..... most importantly, they.... the way they operate is about..... it’s around trust and honesty”.

For the project officer in a London-based SE, self-help meant helping homeless people by giving them an opportunity “...to develop their work and entrepreneurship skills amongst themselves through networking”. Additionally a staff member from a SE in Scotland noted that self-help should be realised in a supportive environment to develop “...various life and work skills”. Another interviewee within a SE with a social emphasis conceptualised self-help as a developmental measure for disadvantaged people “...to develop life and work experience in a team to enhance their self-esteem”. Hence, this operationalisation of self-help echoed the ‘developmental’ approach discussed by Barnes and Walker (1997).

These SEs which emphasised the positive dimensions of 'collective self-help' tended to be SEs with a social rather than business emphasis (see above). A senior staff member from a socially-focused SE called into question the ability of business-focused SEs to promote collective learning amongst their service users. The interviewee thought this is because “...they are based on a different set of values, namely that social enterprise is geared more towards shared profit, involvement in the business” and which might quite frequently lead, as opposed to lateral and supportive social networks amongst homeless people, to “a hierarchical structure of a relationship” (see further below on the interpretation of self-help amongst business-orientated SEs).

Finally, it should be noted that, even amongst those advocating collective forms of self-help amongst homeless people, the the ‘political’ aspect of collective joint action to take part in the decision-making process (Barnes and Walker, 1997) was not articulated by any of the SEs interviewed. This point is further developed below in our discussion about domains of empowerment as understood by SEs.

Self-help as Enhancing Individual Responsibility

All of the SEs in this section were business orientated. As discussed in Chapter 3, in the ‘consumer’ model there is a shift of balance of responsibility between what tends to be the normal activities for service managers and what consumers are expected to do by themselves, which gives the service organisations an opportunity to achieve a greater degree of flexibility. It has been argued that this shift in the balance in responsibility, in turn, may lead to the empowerment of organisations rather than the consumers (Gilliatt et al., 2000).

An individual principle of self-help in the context of SE may be operationalised in a way that an individual is responsible for her/his own self while limiting the role of the organisation (Khan and Bender, 1985). Such a conceptualisation of self-help gives SEs a greater degree of managerial flexibility (Gilliatt et al., 2000). For example, the senior staff of a SE with a business orientation believed that self-help consists of two key words – individual and help. From this perspective, the interviewee thought that projects can help only those who help themselves. Additionally, the senior project staff of a SE with a business focus conceptualised self-help as “...*all about being the master of your own destiny. It’s controlling your own destiny*”.

Similarly, this SE project staff member perceived that self-help meant that project staff mostly work on the fact that they give homeless people a ‘hand up’ but not a ‘hand out’. It was pointed out that

“...so we’re not there to make their lives better. We won’t do all the work. They need to do the work with us. Self-help is a massive part of it and I think changing somebody’s mentality”.

This was also confirmed by a senior staff member from a SE in the North of England who asserted that they enable people to get on and to take responsibility and do things for themselves. The interviewee noted that “...*self-help is exactly that; that somebody*

gives you the tools to help yourself ...You have to get up and do things for yourself, which is all part of life really.” The interviewee also believed that project beneficiaries are “...*they’re like any one of us, can function and put everything behind them that’s hindered them in the past*”. For the senior staff of a SE in Scotland within his project self-help meant that it is about developing a “...*homeless person’s skills to make choices*”. According to the senior staff member of this project, such a conceptualisation of self-help helps project beneficiaries to reach the point where they can make those choices and move on.

Within such an operationalisation of self-help, homeless people are contextualised as ‘consumers’ wherein individual service users are expected to achieve, as Edgar et al. (1999, p.23) have pointed out, ‘their own normalisation’. In this context, self-help is seen as helping people to be more independent.

The interviewees representing SEs with a business emphasis also maintained that SE was not only predicated on self-help, but could help to promote a self-help ethos amongst their service users. The senior staff manager of SE stated the SE project “*helps to combat a dependency culture.*” A senior staff member of a SE with a business focus noted that their project’s practice works in a way that homeless people become independent: “*“Come and help with the shop,” “Come and help me to cook,” they grow, they learn..... so in that they become independent*”. The senior staff of this SE also believed that there is a direct link between SE and self-help. The interviewee described this link which enables them to follow the path: “*They’re going from kind of ‘helped’ to ‘helper’...*”

Significantly, points noted earlier in Chapters 2 and 3 also showed that responsibility shifting from state to community - and ultimately to individuals - is one underlying thrust of the Coalition Government’s Big Society agenda (Kisby, 2010). Linked to SE, this can be seen to be grounded in the ‘consumerism’ model, which views ‘self-help’ as a means to shape ‘responsibilised’ active individuals (McKee, 2008). This was also mirrored in the field. For instance, a senior staff member of an a social emphasis explained that how self-help worked in practice was partly linked to the UK government’s policy, namely satisfying commissioners “...*who don’t want homeless people to be a drain on the public purse and that the project should develop to instil*

self-reliance, to support people to support themselves". In other words, in this context self-help and empowerment are intertwined terms.

Summary of Self-help

So far this section has established that in the homelessness SE field self-help is not conceived in a single manner but rather in various ways. In practice, service providers held very distinct, and sometimes conflicting, objectives: either enhancing collective learning or enhancing individual responsibility. Significantly, those who conceptualised the term as collective learning cast doubt on the embeddedness of self-help into business orientated SEs, as they felt that their ethos could be antithetical to the building of lateral social networks amongst homeless people. Meanwhile, those (business orientated SEs) who perceived self-help as enhancing individual responsibility felt that this was not only embedded in the ethos of their organisation, but also that the way they operated helped to encourage a self-help orientation amongst the homeless people they worked with. These two conflicting notions of self-help could be viewed as encapsulating very different conceptualisations of empowerment amongst SEs in UK, which is the topic to which we now turn.

Empowerment and Social Enterprise

This section begins by discussing why *employment* was identified as a key avenue via which homeless people might be empowered and the rationale behind the service providers' argument that being a SE *makes a difference* to service users. These points are discussed through the prism of the capabilities-grounded *empowerment* conceptual framework presented in Chapter 3 of Part One of this.

Why Employment-based Social Enterprises as a Vehicle for Empowerment?

As discussed in Chapter 2, successive UK governments have prioritised employment-related initiatives with a view to reintegrating single homeless people via their involvement in the labour market (Teasdale, 2010a; Jones and Pleace, 2010; Fitzpatrick et al., 2011; Teasdale; 2012a). Thus a key policy response has been to support and encourage the development of employment-focussed social (Teasdale, 2010a; McKenna, 2011; Teasdale; 2012a).

All key informants interviewed, and the four case study service providers, believed that the employment model was a route out of, and avenue to preventing, homelessness:

“...I think that..... there is an understanding in the organisation that if somebody is in a homeless position or under the threat of homelessness, then that is caused by something, yeah? Whether that be an economic situation, whether it be your own drugs or alcohol issues, or mental health issues or something like that. What the project wants to do is prevent homelessness, to stop homelessness, to address homelessness” (Project manager of SE, North England).

Although all case study projects aimed to empower homeless people through the employment model, variations were noted amongst these SEs. Some stressed the significance of access to paid work, and others emphasised the provision of work experience opportunities for homeless people or improvements to their employment-related skills and qualifications through training.

For instance, some interviewees (from both social and business focused SEs) perceived that paid employment is a crucial element to positively changing homeless people's lives. In one SE with a business focus the senior project manager stressed that *“The link between homelessness and worklessness is absolutely key. ...So the link between homelessness and worklessness is the key priority and that's what our project is all about.”* In a SE with a social emphasis, a project staff member similarly explained the rationale behind focussing on the work facilitation of homeless people as: *“we believe that people are better off in work.”* In another SE, this time with a business focus, the project manager maintained that: *“people's lives become improved through employment”*. Some interviewees were clear in their minds that the employment model has the potential to change complex life issues that homeless people face. According to one manager from a SE with a social orientation, *“...employment is so important..... it does change your whole vision of life”*. For a senior project staff member, employment fundamentally defined a person's identity:

“...it's difficult if you're talking in terms of homeless people. Work employs us altogether, doesn't it? Work is pretty much I guess where your identity comes from. So I would say it's probably very similar for homeless people as it is for anybody getting employment. That your social identity comes

from employment, doesn't it? If you meet a new group of people, either on a training course or to college or whatever, first questions are, 'Where do you live?' you know, 'What job have you got?' 'What kind of car do you drive?' That's all part of our identity. Homeless people, I guess, when they're in that situation almost lost part of their identity because you're just seen or referred to as a homeless person".

However, others interviewed stressed that in order to gain access to employment, homeless people need to be trained and to gain work experience. For example, one project staff member of a SE in Scotland reported that *"we were creating an opportunity for some of the most marginalised people in the city to gain work experience and training in a supported environment"*. Contrast this with the remarks of a front line officer, from a business-orientated SE, for whom empowerment through the employment model is about getting real experience in the workplace. This interviewee believed that *"...it's having... the work experience in the business is definitely what makes the real difference for trainees."* Similarly, another front line officer, this time from a SE with a social emphasis also asserted:

"I think it gives people a really good reference. It gives people a team-working ethic. I think it also helps to motivate them get out of bed in the morning and gives them a real concept of time management. So, you know, why do you have your break at so-and-so time? Why do you get to work on time? Why do we close at 5 o'clock? You know, those kinds of things. And again, we would take that for granted because we're in employment but people that haven't been in employment, it's that structure they need to maybe sort out and learn and understand why we need a structure to the day".

Across the board, respondents felt that for homeless users of SEs, gaining qualifications and skills enhancement is significant within the wider market context in the UK. These interviewees generally thought that their projects helped homeless people to address this and other challenges posed by the recent economic recession to their entering the mainstream labour market, specifically the difficulties of highly competitive workforce selection. For instance, a senior staff member from a SE in Scotland emphasised that there has been an increase in the *"...number of people with no qualifications or very low*

in confidence and self-esteem amongst homeless people” from one side. On the other hand, *“...in the current economic climate people with better work experience and qualifications are more in demand.”* This has also pushed SEs to focus on providing employment, work experience and training elements. Similarly, the senior manager of a SE with a social focus noted that

“..in this economic climate there are people out there that don’t have drug or alcohol issues, don’t have mental health issues, but are looking for work. So... and they have skills and experience like everybody else. So, you know, really we are about that gap in the middle.”

Some service providers thought that employment is a way of promoting individual self-reliance. A senior staff member of a SE with a business emphasis stated the following: *“work gives you... it helps you to help yourself in other areas of your work and your life. Just simply because you’ve got that identity and you know you can do things.”* The interviewees of SEs’ with business emphasis suggested that their employment model rationale differs from that of traditional voluntary organisations. One senior project manager from a SE with a business orientation particularly stressed that the *“...key thing comes back to that idea that this is a business and not a charity”*. The interviewee stated that:

“we have to make money in order to survive and we have to teach people what the normal working world looks like. If we move somebody on into a job out in the city and it’s all a surprise to them then we haven’t trained them right. They should know what to expect when they get there”.

By the same token, project officers in same business-orientated SE also stressed that their employment project is different from charity approaches *“...you know, almost.... it’s almost that parent and child thing, isn’t it, that, ...the charitable organisation is the parent and they look after our children.... you know, ‘These homeless people, they all need looking after.’”*

Several respondents from business-orientated SEs stressed that their SE’s other key difference from voluntary organisations is that charities focus more on volunteering rather than the provision of work experience and employment in real business settings. The front line officer of a SE with a business orientation pointed out that *“I certainly*

wouldn't want to be seeing somebody working for a voluntary organisation for more than six months, nine months". According to this interviewee it is "...a comfort zone for people. It's easy for people to volunteer. If they can volunteer for six to nine months they could work for six to nine months".

Enhancing Homeless People's Capabilities

As set out in the theoretical framework, presented in Chapter 3, the author has operationalised the concept of 'empowerment', drawing on Nussbaum's (2000) framework, into five key domains: *bodily empowerment*; *political and economic empowerment*; *social and emotional empowerment*; and *creative and intellectual empowerment*. In this section, we explore service providers' perspectives on whether employment-based SEs promote the capabilities of homeless people in these key domains. In Chapter 6 we will turn to service users' views. For now let us look at service providers' opinions.

Bodily Empowerment

As described in Chapter 3, bodily empowerment encompasses having reasonable physical and mental health; safe and secure living circumstances; and the ability to meet other fundamental physical needs, such as for food and basic healthcare (Nussbaum, 2000).

As suggested in Chapter 2, specifically in the existing homelessness literature, the importance of meeting the immediate crisis needs of homeless people, such as health and adequate shelter, may be necessary in order to enhance their ability to move on to other empowerment domains of people's life (Kennedy and Fitzpatrick 2001; McNaughton 2005; Teasdale, 2010a) .

Bodily empowerment was on the agenda of all case study service providers. This senior manager of a SE with a business emphasis perhaps illustrated this in the most comprehensive manner of those interviewed:

"..I promote employment and I promote the benefits of employment and I'm strongly convinced that for many people who are unemployed, employment will probably [lead them to] experience better mental health, better physical health, more contentment and more secure, sort of, 'I feel part of society'."

For a number of participants, getting a job was specifically seen as a step on the way to living in safer and more adequate housing:

“...it’s a step towards having somewhere safe, somewhere nice, to live. Not a hostel, not where you’re competing with lots of other people. Not a sort of mediocre flat that’s been given you, but a nice place.” (Project manager, SE with a business focus)

Likewise, the senior manager of another SE portrayed the positive prospect of finding adequate housing and moving on to safer accommodation for individuals working in their project: *“...full-time work and the next step may be a better home of your own. But you can support people to take that first step so they have the ability to take the next step. So I think that’s really why we focus on employment”*.

In the same vein, the senior manager of a SE with a business orientation stressed that the reason they aim to empower through employment is that:

“...We want them to go and move on and be independent and, you know, when you’re working full-time and you’ve got a flat or a house or a secure place of your own you don’t need us anymore. And that’s what success looks like for us. You know, when we catch up with you in six months’ time and you’re still holding down a job and you’ve still got your flat ...”

However, as discussed in Chapter 3, the literature noted that access to adequate accommodation would have greater value if people were simultaneously provided with support to develop the other human potentials listed in Nussbaum’s capabilities. This was also asserted by the senior staff manager of a SE in London who noted that: *“...it isn’t just a roof over their heads. It has to be about that whole person’s life and how they can take responsibility for making those changes”*.

The majority of service providers representing SEs with a social focus placed the greatest accent on mental health, arguing that the mental health of people, including those with a history of addiction, is improved when they gain work. For this interviewee there are homeless people who *“...have not worked for years and years and years and quite often it’s a mental health problem and they lose confidence and in their abilities.....”*. He then pointed out:

"Your mental health issues improve as well when you are in employment and I think..... people who generally do become homeless are.... have faced addiction previously..... They've gone through some sort of trigger point as to why they've got there and generally that's normally..... probably the latter stages of adolescence" (SE with a social emphasis).

By the same token, for front line staff of SEs, there was a sense that homeless people coming into an employment-focused project can overcome feelings of depression and poor mental health:

"...they're able to be part of something, to be active, to be busy, to use up their energy for the day, hopefully sleeping better, eating better; having some kind of positive activity, positive focus, will alleviate some of the issues that are going on and if, at the same time, we can give someone a qualification."

In summary, the examples above indicate that SE service providers feel that employment projects promoted homeless people's ability to improve their mental health and to meet their need for a safe and secure living environment. However, interviewees did not mention any evidence of SEs promoting a homeless person's ability to meet their basic needs such as access to food and healthcare, irrespective of whether they were involved with a SE with a social or business emphasis.

Political and Economic Empowerment

As noted earlier, the political and economic empowerment domain captures having the (financial) resources and (political) power to pursue one's own version of the 'good life'. However, service providers were puzzled when they were asked specifically about the political dimension of empowerment – this aspect of empowerment was not spontaneously raised by any of the service providers interviewed.

In contrast, the economic domain was extensively emphasised by all service providers, coming from both a social and a business focus. In the current context, economic empowerment domain is operationalised as an enhancement of skills, qualifications and practical job competencies via work experience and training. This is consistent with the literature discussed in Chapter 3 (Gist, 1987; Breton, 1994; Zimmermann, 1995; Larsen et al., 2005; Rosenheck et al., 2006).

Most interviewees thought the employment model empowers people by enhancing their skills. For instance, the project manager of a SE with a social emphasis noted:

“Empowerment is about giving people the space and the skills through training, work experience to strengthen their capacity so that an individual would be able to have a positive choice.”

However, some respondents highlighted the value of acquiring work experience and participation in training programmes provided by their projects. A SE project staff member suggested that *“Empowerment is where we give an individual work experience and training, yeah, or that individual becomes able to take advantage of those opportunities that are made available”*. Likewise, a senior staff member of a SE with a social focus also emphasised: *“so we give them the work experience, training yeah..... that’s employment, training, yeah...”*

In a similar vein, a SE front line officer believed that training and work experience could raise the personal confidence of homeless people. She noted that confidence raising is a key element of empowerment and that in the homelessness context one should employ an individualised approach to the groups targeted (the significance of enhancing homeless people’s self-confidence is discussed in the following section). She added: *“...we understand that the people that we work with need our help and if they don’t get our help, yes, they’ll go somewhere else that would become a number. Whereas, here they’re all individuals”*. This front-line officer then continued that they work very closely with people: *“...each day, each week, each month. To make sure they are taking small steps”*. Likewise the project manager of another SE with a social emphasis:

“...it might be going from unemployed to being able to talk confidently about yourself, to working well with others in a group, to having a certificate in maths, to then being able to go to an interview with your potential employer..... Those steps are massive compared to going from nought to sixty, and going from going from unemployed to employed”.

There were some service providers who further expanded the details of the types of skills which should be covered within the economic empowerment domain, such as 'soft skills' and 'core life skills', in addition to qualifications and the general provision of

work experience. According to these respondents, this is justified based on the nature of the problems homeless people face in accessing employment. An officer with a SE with a business focus noted:

“We focus around employability and skills because you need skills to get a job and whether that be soft skills, such as, you know, your confidence and being able to work as a team, or whether that be qualificational skills..... You need both to gain employment. It helps you communicate with other people. It helps you use negotiating skills. It helps you problem solve.”

Meanwhile, the senior project staff of another SE argued that their project looks at people’s issues holistically, and that independent living skills were outlined as one of the main elements of their training and employment project. This interviewee noted that they try to identify “...the skills that are required to give someone independent living ability. And employment is often a route to independent living skills.” These interviewees’ views are consistent with the literature discussed in Chapter 2, in noting the equal importance of work and core life skills for homeless people with complex needs (Pleace et al., 1997; Kennedy and Fitzpatrick, 2001; Harding and Willett, 2008; Smith, 2008; Rees, 2009).

A project staff member at a SE with a business orientation stressed that most training programmes overlooked the significance of softer skills in levelling up the confidence of vulnerable people:

“...It could be the softer skills, like being able to pick up the telephone and speak to somebody new and approach them and say, “Hi, I’m just ringing.... with regard to the job that you’ve got advertised.” That, for some people, is a massive step. It’s a massive increase in their ability and their confidence. So we work on that on a smaller scale and, on a larger scale, yes, employment is always what we would focus on”.

An officer of a SE in the North of England asserted the same point, but added what he viewed as the value of the volunteering element, explicitly drawing attention to the merits of the unpaid element of gaining work experience. For instance, within their project empowerment is understood as enabling volunteers “...from the start of a social enterprise [to] become employees at some point”. In other words, for this respondent,

unpaid work can be a key stepping stone to getting paid work. However, he said explicitly that volunteers should not be perceived by the organisation as “guest workers” as they are building and developing a SE’s “existence”. This interviewee asserted that homeless people have been empowered if *“they are working with staff to develop the social enterprise and they have then become functioning members and part of its expansion.”* For this interviewee, strengthening the financial independence of homeless people was significant, and he argued that: *“..... to be empowered you have to be financially able”*.

As noted in Chapter 4, one of the case study projects was established by an ex-homeless person, who emphasised that: *“...with homeless people you should be very patient... it takes time, yeah... it takes time until they like what they do in the project.”* This interviewee’s view is consistent with the literature in Chapter 2, which notes that some SE practitioners in the homelessness field recognise the vital importance of the supportive environment in the workplace for the homeless people (see Teasdale, 2012a).

According to this participant, enhancing the economic empowerment domain can also be operationalised as a win-win process, mutually contributing both to service users’ work and life skills applicable in work contexts, and to SE development in general.

Thus, as the discussion above suggests, service providers believed that employment-centred SE models were effective in enhancing homeless people’s economic capabilities, and not only their technical work skills, but also their softer skills and life skills with respect to functioning in the workplace. These points were common to both SEs with a social or business emphasis. Service providers also generally thought that SE projects would facilitate the financial independence of their project beneficiaries. However, the political aspect of empowerment, in contrast to the economic, was not articulated by service providers interviewed in this study (see also Kennedy and Fitzpatrick, 2001).

Social and Emotional Empowerment

The social and emotional domain, discussed in Chapter 3, embraces the enhancement of an individual’s self-confidence, self-esteem and positive self-perception and is thus strongly associated with the mental health dimension of bodily empowerment discussed above (Gutierrez, 1992; Nussbaum, 2000).

Most of the case study service providers interviewed believed that the employment-based approach empowers homeless people by promoting their social and emotional life domain: “...it’s from having positive social networks; it’s about building confidence and self-esteem; it’s about building skills; it’s about building work experience.” These interviewees referring to the social and emotional domain stressed how employment helps homeless people to build “...confidence and self-esteem” (the project manager of a SE with a social emphasis); to strengthen *self-esteem*, *self-worth*, *dignity*, and “to move on psychologically” (the project manager of a SE with a business focus); to develop “new social groups” (the senior project manager of a SE with a social orientation); and “to connect up in the communities” (project manager, SE with a social orientation).

Some respondents stressed specific aspects of the emotional empowerment domain, arguing that their ‘target group’ were enabled to overcome their social isolation. For instance, one interviewee explained that homeless people experiencing unemployment tend to lack social networks, which, he felt, was quite isolating. In contrast, employment is “...a reason to get up in the morning; it’s from having positive social networks.” Similarly, in an interview, a senior project staff member in a SE with a social focus remarked that:

“...you make your friends at work. Building those new social groups. But bringing you out into the work place brings you in contact with a new set of people who’ve got different values, different norms, different ways of behaving and maybe cause you to think about your own ways of behaving differently and move on psychologically. There are things about self-actualisation and progression as well.”

Meanwhile, a project staff member from another SE with a social focus stressed that employment projects might be a stepping stone to making friendship networks with those who did not experience homelessness. He went on to explain:

“...if you’ve been a drug user for three years your peer group are drug users; you’d actually need to change your peer group. You actually need to change your life circumstances, who you associate with, your friendships, all the things that have probably given you some stability in your life. But can you imagine not having a group of friends?”

Meanwhile, others viewed their employment project as an opportunity to improve people's self-esteem. A front line officer pointed out the fact that some homeless people have come from a broken home and that they've maybe been in prison:

"... they've always been told they're stupid and they can't do things and they haven't got what it takes to hold down a job; and often it just means that you need to positively reinforce the good things in their lives and give people the opportunities that they do have things that they can do. At the end of the day you're just showing that you love somebody" (SE with a social emphasis).

There were other respondents who emphasised the role of the employment model in re-connecting homeless individuals to networks they were in contact with previously and their communities in general. For one senior staff manager, empowerment in his employment project is perceived as *"...helping people connect up in the communities they're living in, to develop their own business and to be able to live independent from homelessness"* (SE with a social focus). This finding is also in agreement with Peterson et al. (2005) and Fitzpatrick (2005) for whom empowerment is an opportunity for social cohesion and affiliation and a sense of belonging to a group or community develop social networks among involved individuals.

In similar vein, another interviewee maintained that *"...and so I suppose we would see that as a sense of empowerment. I mean, greater networks, greater contacts, awareness of others."* This is also about an attempt to identify yourself with similar others or develop social networks with the wider community (see also Peterson et al. 2005).

Another specification of the emotional empowerment domain by respondents was related to how employment may address low self-esteem and lack of self-worth either because of family background and life history, or from having a "label" attached to long-term unemployment and to the living situation of homeless people. As noted in Chapter 3, Nussbaum's (2000) capabilities thesis advocates the promotion of a person's ability to interact with others on the basis of equal dignity and self-respect and to work on how one is viewed by other people. Having a meaningful positive social relationship with other people, on the basis of equal dignity and self-respect was also a challenge typical to most homeless people (Johnsen and Fitzpatrick, 2010). Project staff explained that the underpinning idea of why their project focussed on employment was that it

establishes“...*their self- worth as well and their self-respect*” (SE with a social focus). As discussed earlier in Chapter 2, the literature mentioned that many people experiencing homelessness are regularly confronted with discrimination and stigmatisation (Paashe, 2009). A front line officer noted that “...*the stigma and stereotype that is attached to unemployment is quite..... Well, it’s shocking really*” (SE with a social emphasis).

An overlapping point was made by one of the front line officers of a SE with business orientation who noted that stigma is about mental attitudes around homelessness and stereotypes:

"People generally in society don't want to see homeless people, they don't want to see homeless people on the street and I don't think it's because they feel sorry for them or don't believe that they should be there. I think it's because of their own feelings. I think people who see homelessness or see people sleeping rough..... I think it probably makes them feel quite uncomfortable and I think it probably makes them feel like the person sleeping rough is not worthy of being employed or even being a person. They're not treated as an individual, generally, by society." (SE with a business orientation).

Likewise, some interviewees remarked that a lot of homeless people have got no qualifications and this can also feed into low confidence and self-esteem, and in this regard employment is an element to empower people in order to raise their self-worth and confidence:

“...[homeless people have] got self-loathing, quite low self-esteem, low confidence. Basically, they feel quite worthless. If you speak to a lot of unemployed people they seem a different area of society..... It's quite unfortunate.” (SE with a business emphasis).

The interviewee then continued to note that employment “...*makes people a lot more appreciative as well of.... being able to pay the bills, of being able to go to the supermarket and get fruit and vegetables...*”

A number of service providers placed particular stress on potential project impacts on the re-affiliation of homeless people with family members. A project officer expressed

that “*their family’s life becomes better through employment*”, and then stressed that “... *we can give somebody something like that that is going to help them a) in the outside world, b) win respect from their family for making a positive change to their situation....*” (SE with a social emphasis). Yet, the paradox about family is that it could be both the source of homelessness and the emotional support which might help someone to recover from it (Lemos and Durkacz, 2002). Nonetheless, some case study interviewees also expressed that there could be a positive ‘*knock-on effect*’ (SE with a social orientation) for wider families arising from their SE project:

“I think once you gain employment, for example as a lone parent, you’re setting a really good example for your children. You know, you’re setting them a good example for them to go to school on time because if they don’t go to school on time they get reprimanded, they get pulled up. If, you know, Dad doesn’t go to work, he gets sacked or he gets a smack on the wrist, he then gets his wage taken for the day or he doesn’t get his wage for the week if he doesn’t go to work. It then has a knock-on effect at home because he can’t pay bills. You know, you’ve got the rent man knocking at your door. You’re unable to get food from the supermarket. You’re unable to get clothes. Just the general, basic, things that you or I may take for granted.”
(SE in the North of England).

Thus, these service providers’ interviews, representing both SEs with a social emphasis and SE with a business orientation, believed that the case study employment-focused SEs were effective in strengthening the social and emotional capabilities of homeless people. In particular, the interviewees asserted that many homeless people’s self-confidence, self-respect and positive self-perception would be improved by their engagement in the SE. Service providers clearly felt that homeless people’s abilities to establish and maintain meaningful social relationships with peers in the workplace, friends, and extended family members would also be promoted.

Creative and Intellectual Empowerment

As discussed in Chapter 3, the creative and intellectual empowerment domain, as developed in the capabilities-grounded theoretical framework underpinning this thesis, is not covered in traditional empowerment literature. The creative and intellectual empowerment domain relates to a person’s capabilities in relation to developing his/her

own 'true self' as a human being in terms of creativity, learning and intellectual activity of one's own choice, and spirituality and inner development.

Interestingly, service providers never mentioned any of these capabilities when describing their understandings of empowerment or the impact of their project on service users' lives. This contrasts strongly with the experience and views of homeless people, wherein creative and intellectual aspects of empowerment featured significantly, as will be discussed in the next chapter.

Conclusion

This chapter has investigated service providers' conceptual understanding and operationalisation of the concepts of SE, self-help and empowerment and their interrelationship within the homelessness field in the UK.

It has been demonstrated that the conceptualisation and operationalisation of homelessness SEs in the field in the UK is more complex than the DTI 'official' definition suggests, with the ethos and operation of SEs fundamentally influenced by their origins. Thus, those SEs which were founded using private capital tended to have a predominantly business emphasis which 'imitated' commercial enterprises in its operation. Other SEs, originating from charitable organisations, in contrast emphasised social aims and were more akin to traditional charitable or voluntary organisations in their ethos. Interestingly, both these types of SEs may similarly take the CIC legal form. In practice, this challenges the previous UK government's attempt to ideologically differentiate SEs from traditional organisations through the introduction of CIC law in 2005 (Teasdale, 2012b). The research also showed that service providers, in contrast to Alter's (2007) SE typology described in Chapter 2, did not differentiate their projects in terms of integrated and embedded models, but rather in terms of this fundamental business or social emphasis.

Furthermore, the DTI (2002) definition suggests, as noted in Chapter 2, that SEs are set up to generate income in order for this to be reinvested in the pursuit of social objectives. However, three out of four case study SEs involved in the study had evolved from existing direct charitable support and they were extensively subsidised by charitable agencies. This study was therefore consistent with the existing literature with respect to the fact that SEs did not earn a profit through trading (though they usually

earned some income from trading activities) but rather used a cost-transfer strategy from various sources, including state resources via the benefits system for disadvantaged people, in order to attain financial viability (Teasdale, 2012a). This challenges the UK Government concept of SEs having a trading capacity to sustain their operational budget. Thus, SEs are in fact quite in hybrid in financial nature.

However, there was a subset of SEs with a social focus which tried to identify their projects from a 'self-presentational' aspect. This is a 'public rebranding' where organisations 'play out' or 'play down' certain historical characteristics depending on their audience which is described as an OIM approach. In other words, these organisations use the OIM approach to rhetorically self-identify themselves as SEs to gain access to a wider range of funders. The chapter indicated that an element of OIM might also be channelled to wider market 'players' in order to be 'taken seriously' for business deals with suppliers, by tenderers and customers. This can partly be explained by the deliberately vaguely-defined term of SE provided by the DTI definition (Teasdale, 2012a; Johnsen, 2012).

This chapter also demonstrated that SEs were sharply divided as to their conceptualisation of self-help: some focused on an element of horizontal collective learning and mutual support (this was limited to SEs with a social focus), whereas others prioritised individual responsibility and self-reliance on the part of homeless people themselves (this was particularly the case with those SEs with a more business orientation). This conceptualisation of self-help as individualised self-reliance may be viewed as reflecting the underlying thrust of the Coalition Government's Big Society vision, grounded on the 'consumerism' model in which notions of 'self-help' are intended to shape 'responsibilised' active individuals (McKee, 2008; Kisby, 2010).

This chapter illustrated that practitioners conceptualised empowerment through the prism of employment. Interestingly, irrespective of the fact that both types of SEs used a similar employment approach to empower homeless people, these two conflicting notions of self-help were mirrored in very different conceptualisations of empowerment amongst SEs in the UK. Socially focussed SEs conceived the concept as the creation of a space for single homeless people to work, gain experience and to be trained in a supported and a collective learning environment. In contrast, service providers of SEs with a business focus thought that employment is a way of promoting individual self-

reliance. Furthermore, these interviewees from business oriented SEs also felt that their employment model rationale differs from that of traditional voluntary organisations, in particular business-focussed SEs provide employment, training and work experience in a real business setting whilst charities focus more on volunteering.

Interviewees believed that employment-centred SE models were effective in enhancing homeless people's ability to improve their mental health and to meet their need for a safe and secure living environment. However, interviewees did not mention any evidence of SEs promoting a homeless person's ability to meet their basic needs such as access to food and healthcare, irrespective of whether they were involved with a SE with a social or business emphasis. The examples discussed also suggested that SE service providers thought that employment projects promoted homeless people's economic capabilities, which involved individuals' work skills, soft skills and life skills with respect to functioning in the workplace. These points were common to both SEs with a social or business emphasis. Service providers thought that SE projects would facilitate the financial independence of their project beneficiaries. However, the political aspect of empowerment, in contrast to the economic one, was not articulated by service providers interviewed in this study (see also Kennedy and Fitzpatrick, 2001).

Service providers, representing both SEs with a social emphasis and those with a business orientation, also believed that the case study employment-focused SEs were effective in strengthening the social and emotional capabilities of homeless people such as self-confidence, self-respect and positive self-perception. Participants asserted that homeless people's abilities to establish and maintain meaningful social relationships with peers in the workplace, friends, and extended family members would also be promoted via engagement in SE employment projects. However, service providers neglected the capabilities related to the creative and intellectual domain of homeless individuals when describing their understandings of empowerment or the impact of their project on service users' lives. This contrasts strongly with the experience and views of homeless people, wherein creative and intellectual aspects of empowerment featured significantly, as will be discussed in the next chapter. These will be contrasted in the following section from homeless people's points of view.

The next chapter will now investigate service users' views on employment-focused SEs, wherein a key element will be to compare their assessment of their 'empowerment' in each of these domains to that of the service providers just discussed.

Chapter 6: Empowerment of Homeless People

Introduction

In contrast to Chapter 5, which considered mainly the perspectives of service providers, this chapter focuses predominantly on the views and experiences of service users, albeit that the opinions of service providers are also sometimes presented to provide a point of comparison. The chapter is therefore largely based on empirical data drawn from interviews with 23 homeless and ex-homeless people engaged with the four case study SEs, one of which was 'business orientated' and three of which had a 'social emphasis'. One of these 'social SEs' was established by an ex-homeless person with the support of a 'parent' charity.

All 23 service user research participants were male, and aged between 25-43 years old. None of the interviewees were in paid work, 16 were 'volunteering' (12 in social SEs and four in the business-focussed SE), and seven people were in 'training' (three in social SEs and four in the business-focussed SE). In total, 15 participants were involved with the case study SEs with a social emphasis and eight with the SE with a business emphasis. With regard to their accommodation status, 12 of the service users interviewed were living in hostels (including 10 linked with the social-focused SEs and two in the business-oriented SE), three were living in friends' houses (one in a social focussed SE and two in business-focussed SEs), and eight were staying in council flats (four in the social-focussed SEs and four in the business-focussed SE) (see Chapter 4 for methodological details).

Drawing on this qualitative evidence base, this chapter attempts to explore the following questions:

- How effective are *employment-centred* social enterprise models in empowering homeless people via enhancing their capabilities?
- Does its being a *social enterprise* (rather than a traditional charity and/or commercial enterprise) *make a difference* to the experiences and/or perspectives of its service users?

In so doing, it draws on the conceptual framework established in Chapter 3, and attempts to interrogate systematically the extent to which the case study employment-focused SEs enhanced the capabilities of homeless people in the following four

domains: *bodily empowerment*; *political and economic empowerment*; *social and emotional empowerment*; and *creative and intellectual empowerment*. Each of these empowerment domains is now examined in turn, before we consider the matter of the 'difference' that projects being SEs makes to homeless people themselves.

Bodily Empowerment

As described in Chapter 3, bodily empowerment encompasses having reasonable physical and mental health; safe and secure living circumstances; and the ability to meet other fundamental physical needs, such as for food and basic healthcare.

In Chapter 5, service providers expressed the belief that their employment projects promoted individuals' bodily empowerment, and in particular that the homeless people they worked with would achieve "...*better physical health*" and be able to move on to "...*somewhere nice, to live. Not a hostel*" (Senior Manager, SE with social emphasis).

This was supported by a few service users who noted positive changes in their health after they became involved in a SE project, with some emphasising that the work provided by the project provided them with the motivation to move forward with their lives, helping them to combat substance misuse in particular:

"... I'm doing something with me time during the day so it's stopping me from going out drinking and smoking drugs and being...I'm keeping out of trouble comin' 'ere, doing this, and keepin' off the drugs and the alcohol, which is a good thing. My life's getting' a bit more healthier" (Bill).

For service users, health-related aspirations were at least as often about improvements in mental health as physical health. For instance, Steve, noted: "*I was.... I was just hoping that I'd get better mentally and er.... given the opportunity to like get back into a working atmosphere...*". A number of participants mainly from SEs with a social focus highlighted specific aspects of their engagement in a SE project that allowed them to overcome their feelings of depression and to improve their mental health:

"So I was really low, sort of depressed basically. And this has built me up. Although physically I'm quite healthy, fit and healthy, my mental health was really bad because I was just coming off the back of a serious addiction – heroin and drink – and that had taken its toll on me" (Tony).

The participant then pointed out that: *my mental.... my mental health massively improved*".

In the main, homeless people did not indicate that the source of any improvements to their mental or physical health was the acquisition of the job itself, but rather they were usually referring to the supportive work environment in the SE, particularly the staffs' positive attitude towards them and the problems they faced.

"You know, some days you think a bit negative whereas 'ere they get you to look on the brighter side of it and turn it around, try and make you think positive all the time, you know. They always encourage you, "You can do it. We know you can do it." (John)

A number of homeless people commented positively on the project staff's tolerant and constructive attitude to their health issues:

"And if you tell them, like, what problems you've got, like your physical health, they'll adapt around you. You know..... they're no' like.... they're not a..... in a glass bowl, like a fish in a glass bowl. They help you. They don't say, like, "Just get on with this, get on with that." They say, like, "How're you doing today? How're you feeling?" (John).

Interestingly, another key element of this supportive work environment could be informal collective self-help from peers, which in turn contributed to improvements in the health of service users. Some homeless people who were engaged in SE projects with a social emphasis reported that this mutual self-help was facilitated by the project staff (this was not the case in the business-focused SE). For example, homeless people were encouraged to stay in close contact with other trainees, volunteers or workers, and if they did not turn up they tried to phone them to find out how they were:

"...after I 'aven't been in for like three days, four days a week, somebody will 'phone me up a bit, "Are you alright, mate? How's it going? I 'aven't seen you for like a couple of days and was worried about ya." So soon as I miss a couple of days they start worrying about it, thinking summat's 'appened to me. So they 'ave to.... they 'phone up just to check, to make sure I'm still alive and kicking" (Sam).

As noted earlier, service providers argued that employment in a SE may help homeless people to secure a safe and stable living environment. However, there was little evidence of an enhancement in this aspect of bodily empowerment in either those SEs with a social or a business emphasis. Of the 12 participants who still stayed in a hostel their actual living circumstances had not changed since their involvement with the SE had commenced, and three others were still sleeping on friends' floors and the remaining eight interviewees were still staying in council flats. For instance, when Tony first came to a SE project, he had hoped it would help him to avoid sleeping on people's sofas, yet was still struggling to access independent accommodation. He commented:

"The fear factor about being homeless.... I've got no security. I've not got my own space".

Similarly, another SE project homeless person, Timmy, noted:

"I didn't feel physically threatened [living in hostel] but it's the general not having no security, no stability..... That's what's..... that's what's kind of scary ... Having no security, basically."

Although Jimmy had his own council flat, he noted that his hope of moving out from the neighbourhood he was living in, where he feels unsafe, had not yet been accomplished:

"... 'cos I come from an area what is known for criminals and violence and everything else. It was hard to try and keep out of it 'cos the company you kept, know what I mean?"

Thus, this evidence suggests that homeless people's engagement in the case study SE projects did contribute to at least some homeless individuals' bodily empowerment, specifically by helping to improve their mental health and their resistance to substance misuse. These positive findings were mainly associated with the social SEs rather than business-orientated SEs, particularly in relation to the supportive work environment generated by the project staff and, in some cases, the mutual self-help of peers. However, the examples above also suggest that people's ability to meet their need for a safe and secure living environment was not generally fulfilled, irrespective of whether they were involved with a SE with a social or business emphasis. Likewise, this study

uncovered no evidence of SEs of either type assisting participants to meet other basic needs, including for access to healthcare.

Economic and Political Empowerment

Economic and political empowerment relates to having the (financial) resources and (political) power to pursue one's own version of the 'good life'. As discussed in Chapter 5, service providers tended to focus on economic empowerment, arguing that *“empowerment is about giving people the skills...”* through provision of training and work experience in order to be *“financially able”* (SE the project manager). Political empowerment was seldom mentioned by these SE service providers.

Overall, homeless people's expectations at the point of recruitment to SE projects were consistent with service providers' views in relation to the significance of skills enhancement and the 'accumulation' of work experience. For instance, one service user Sam noted that: *“...I hoped I would get new skills basically. And.... learning new skills is quite good, you know”*.

This meant that homeless service users, like service providers, stressed the importance of the economic domain, with a particular emphasis on gaining and enhancing work skills:

“And I learned already quite a lot of technical skills, so I can repair my bike, my wife's bike and my daughter's bike and..... also to function socially in the work environment which was....since I stopped working that was my worry, could I..... cope with that again? On a full-time basis? Or days a week? So, yes, it has already helped me” (Marcel).

Likewise, Paul pointed out that: *“So, you know, you pass your Painting & Decorating Course here or you can pass your Woodworking, er.... you get a certificate at the end of it and that goes towards your CV...”*. Similarly, Martin aimed *“to better myself and, you know, I got some qualifications”*.

Others referred to the value of the provision of work experience within the project: Compton thought that his working experience would help him to accomplish his plans to set up his own business: *“Well, basically, it just gives me an insight into business. How it works. Because eventually I want to have my own business”*.

Some front line workers from SEs noted that it was a time-consuming process to adapt homeless people to a working way of life (see Chapter 5), and a number of service users confirmed this, including Jimmy:

“It took me ages to learn what I’ve learned, because I’m dyslexic as well. I ‘ave trouble reading and writing so it’s took me a long time to get where I’ve got where I’ve got to-day but..... when it comes to me teaching other people I teach them in the way that I’ve been taught so they can learn quicker. Know what I mean?...”.

The ethos within SEs with a social emphasis lent itself to project staff spending the time required to help their service users build up the life and technical skills required for the workplace. Linked with this, and interestingly, a number of interviewees referred to the fact that those 'user-led' SE projects which were set up by an ex-homeless person worked especially well in helping them to gain work experience as it created a 'role model' whereby the project leader motivated them not to miss working days and encouraged the enhancement of their practical skills. Furthermore, these 'peer' project leaders had a better idea of how to build trusting relationships with their homeless service users. This in turn, in the interviewees' views, made the project's atmosphere very different from commercial companies' environment (see further below).

However, on the negative side, a number of participants felt that the training courses provided in the SEs were not advanced enough to enable them to gain skills that might be applied in practice, and that this was something impeding them from moving on from volunteering to a full-time job. For instance, John stressed:

“You know, and just like.... you know.... it’s a few months.... a few weeks’ course but you want that professional, the upper level where, you know, you learn more and, you know, you want to become a chef and then you can.... you get that qualification from a higher level”.

Others expressed their concern that projects failed to provide a large enough range of choice for homeless people in terms of skills development and acquiring a work experience. Steve wondered:

“...maybe if they belonged to a bigger company like Morrisons’s, Asda, places like that where they have different skills to learn; that’s more than

likely in these days and times that's what you're going to end up working on, providing the experience for that. Know what I mean?"

Similarly, Jimmy noted that when he first came to the project he hoped to gain high quality work experience and skills development. However he was quite sceptical about whether he would be able to get what he had hoped for initially and then noted: *"...I don't see myself as being empowered whatsoever"*. In some cases there was a sense that there just was an insufficient 'volume' of work activity provided by the SEs. Gilbert claimed that: *"There's not enough work to set volunteers on, to learn that. 'Cos you're stood around quite a lot not doing anything."*

Nine interviewees out of 23 also expressed unhappiness with their volunteer status within SEs, particularly as this meant that they were still reliant on state benefits. This meant that, in contrast to the hopes expressed by service providers in Chapter 5, most service users in SEs had not yet achieved financial independence. For example, Steve made it clear that he was disappointed with his volunteering status, and wanted paid work so that:

"...you're not worrying about the everyday things that go on in your life, as, you know, paying for your bills. You know.... putting food on your table, or anything like that."

As discussed in Chapter 5, all projects use a cost-transfer strategy from state resources, organising volunteering and training hours per week in a way that allows homeless people to remain eligible for state benefits (Teasdale, 2012a). However, a number of participants stressed that they wished to be financially independent and not claim state benefits. John explicitly noted: *"Yeah, yeah, but the biggest drawback is you don't get any money. You know, that's its biggest drawback....."* Similarly, Jimmy found he still felt insecure in his everyday life given his lack of earnings:

"Getting a wage. The financial aspect of it. Solely. Nothing more. As I say, if I had an income of an income of some sort I'd be quite happy doing this, you know. 'Cos I do forty, fifty, hours a week here and I'm quite happy 5+ doing that but because I don't earn any wages that's a dilemma. So it's a sort of a Catch 22 predicament. It's a no win situation. You need to be

earning money just to have quality of life. My £60 a week is not enough to live”.

From a different angle, the volunteer status was criticised as undermining the self-help, personal responsibility ethos of SEs by some. Peter, ex-homeless service user, for example, in contrast to the perspective of senior managers representing SEs with a business emphasis, who assumed that the SE employment model promoted individual self-reliance, thought that:

“I’m trying... it’s a responsibility that I have to myself in order not to drink; it’s a responsibility to the volunteers out here, to help them get through their day without this or without that. You know what I mean? Whereas the volunteer, where’s the responsibility? The only responsibility they’ve got is to exchange their time for some labour...”

Finally, some case study projects’ staff whose organisations ‘originated’ from charities agreed with Teasdale (2010a), who is a bit cautious about generalised calls in regards to empowerment through employment models:

"I believe that it needs to be reasonable employment and it needs to be supported. I mean we wouldn’t advocate that all of our homeless people start work. Some... they’re not ready for it. It’s not right for them." (Nigel)

Alan, a homeless service user, was also cautious in this regard: *“You know, that sort of thing. Yeah, work is good as long as.... it’s done from the angle of actually helping the person rather than releasing the organisation from any responsibility towards the person.*

In summary, employment-centred models were effective in empowering homeless people in the economic domain to a certain extent, specifically in enhancing their skills through the provision of training, and their life skills with respect to functioning in the workplace. However, at the same time there could be dissatisfaction with the basic level of the training content and the limited range of training opportunities afforded, and also the volunteer status of most the work placements was a source of unhappiness to many participants. These points were common to both SEs with a social or business emphasis. However, another very interesting point to emerge was that interviewees engaged in SEs with a social orientation highlighted the positive impact of gaining work experience

in bottom-up user-led projects in which the project leaders were ex-homeless people, which they found highly motivational. This example also reflects some elements of both the Social innovation school of SE which views individuals as ‘change makers’ as well as the European perspective of SE which points out user-led development of SEs noted in the literature in Chapter 2 (Johnson, 2000; Mair and Marti, 2006; Paredo and Chrisman, 2006; Defourny and Nyssens, 2008; Stevens et al., 2009; Teasdale, 2010b). The political aspect of empowerment, as opposed to the economic one, was articulated by neither service users nor service providers interviewed in this study (see also Kennedy and Fitzpatrick, 2001).

Social and Emotional Empowerment

The social and emotional domain of empowerment relates to a person’s ability to engage in meaningful social relationships on the basis of equal dignity and self-respect, including with peers in the workplace, friends, partners, children, and extended family members. It also relates to the enhancement of an individual’s self-confidence, self-esteem and positive self-perception (and is thus strongly associated with the mental health dimension of bodily empowerment discussed above). In Chapter 5 service providers argued that employment-led SEs helped to strengthen project beneficiaries’ social and emotional well-being by promoting their *self-esteem*, *self-worth*, and *dignity* including via helping them to develop “*new social groups*” (project manager of a SE).

Generally, these hopes were echoed in the expectations of homeless people when they first engaged with SE projects. For instance, Steve, who had recently joined a SE project when interviewed, told me that the project “...*keeps my self-respect up because I was, obviously, unemployed and I wasn’t working and I wasn’t doing anything*”. Others noted that engaging with project where they were treated then with dignity helped them to change their self-perception positively, which in turn, improved their sense of self-worth: “*I always thought people thought the worst of me or people would see me as being a drug addict or homeless or this or that, instead of seeing me as a person*” (Tony). However this feeling has changed since Tony first came to the project:

“Now, a bit more self-worth, I think I’ve got a better idea of what people do see in me; and they see me as a person now, they don’t just see me as a drug addict or a homeless person...Twelve months ago I wouldn’t have been able to sit here and talk to a stranger. I would have been really anxious, quite

nervous...it's given me more confidence in my own abilities. It's given me more confidence in my abilities."

Other participants noted that their confidence had risen significantly since they first became involved in a SE project:

"I suppose I could say I'm more confident now than I was before. Because before I would never try anything. If somebody said to me, "" I'd be, "Nah, it's not going to work." You know, I was very defeatist about everything..." (Campton).

"Well, so far it's going well because I've gained lots of experience, Obviously..... I've met lots of good people and obviously I've got lots of confidence. I feel.... I feel I've achieved.... I'm really proud of what I've done so far" (Mike).

A number of interviewees thought this enhanced self-confidence, in turn, enabled them to structure their lives more positively: *"Well, I.... I've become more focussed in what I want to do in life" (John).* Alan thought that the working in the SE project *"gave me my self-confidence back. Self-esteem and my focus back. Gave me summat to focus on..."*.

Others particularly stressed their strengthened ability to affiliate with social networks as a result of their involvement with the SE. According to Tony, this partly happened due to the positive perception of him by his family members. He then went on to stress that: *"...the perception, other people's perception of me, has changed and especially my family". They tell me that I've come on sort of..... I don't know to put it. Come on massive amounts or a huge amount within the last sort of few years..."*.

For a number of service users, both their social and emotional well-being was also enhanced by a heightened sense of 'relatedness' to their local community since becoming involved with the SE. This came about via their contributing their volunteer labour to the SE project, which they perceived as making a contribution to the community more broadly, which in turn improved their sense of self-respect. Sam, who was from a SE with a social focus noted that:

"...well the self-respect thing is basically when you get laid off from a job you're down low and you're can't get another job; and you're moody and

you get, och, you just don't feel.... like you're part of the community. ...Now I'm working in here voluntarily I'm putting something back into the community so it's like me paying something back for what I took out, if you can understand that".

Similarly, Jimmy perceived an emotional purpose in volunteering within the SE project: *"...there's a 'feel good' factor, you know, there's making a contribution, knowing I'm helping out. I just prefer to be doing something rather than doing nothing at all..."* Another service user, this time from a SE with a business focus, noted: *"I were comin' on a voluntary basis..... it just me thinking I ain't as bad off as what I thought I were..."* (Bred).

During the course of the interviews, some homeless people also noted that they gained a positive emotional benefit from occupying their time in a constructive way on the project. Bill explained that he was a sort of 'veteran' of the project and then moved on to emphasise that it has made difference to a life he wanted to live:

"Well, in the way of thinking of my lifestyle and 'ow my lifestyle is. Me before.... I used to be a raving drug-head and piss-head. I used to drink alcohol and smoke drugs all day long, every day, and then.... when I got to complete out of my face stage I'd go and cause trouble or pick fights with people or.... Because I come 'ere I don't have time for that..." (Bill).

This sense of being productively occupied could also enabled them to re-visit their self-evaluation in a constructive way. For instance, Martin explained:

"I've learned a lot of things that I didn't know about myself and how I am and how I react with other people that probably weren't at the forefront of how I used..... of how I am because I'm used to that "parent lifestyle" [staying with children at home when one is unemployed] rather than worker lifestyle."

Similar to points made in earlier sections, most homeless people believed that it was the supportive working environment, rather than the work itself, that played the key role in enhancing their emotional well-being. As also noted above, this appeared to be more typical of SEs with a social than a business emphasis. One key theme to emerge in this respect was that of trust:

"I got a 'phone call off the manager one day, when I walked along....a bit something else to do. So she 'phoned me up and asked me if I wanted to do some training. Train some lads on painting and decorating. I was over the moon. It was like I was dead chuffed because somebody's actually put trust into me and given me a job bit of trust and someone who knew what he was doing" (Tony).

The importance attached to being trusted seems linked in part to the sensitivity felt by those with criminal records about how they might be viewed by mainstream employers:

"So I felt more better in myself because somebody out there trusts me. They're not looking at my criminal record and thinking of what I used to be. They're thinking of what I'm doing now and what I'm capable of doing now and what I done since I been out of jail. You know what I mean? It's not like I've gone back to crime and committed more crime or sat on me arse and done now. I actually got off me arse and did summat. So, no.... thanks to this place I've managed to keep out of trouble and build myself more confidence in doing things. Especially since I started training, I love it here" (Tony).

That said, there was also evidence that being engaged in productive work could in and of itself also contribute to improved emotional well-being amongst service users. One ex-homeless person, the owner of a SE, now working full-time, also stressed that people's feelings of self-worth and self-esteem could be considerably strengthened by seeing the results of their labour:

"When you see them come in here..... like this..... At the end of four weeks the bike..... they get given a dirty bike; it's rubbish. At the end of four weeks the bike is polished, it's clean, it... you can ride it and they take pride in it. And it gives them a bit of dignity. "Look what I've done. For the first time in my life I've built a bicycle. Look how nice and clean it is." That's.... that's what they do. They talk. They tell their friends and their friends come here, say, "Oh, I want to do the Bike Course." Because it gives them a little bit of dignity and a little bit of respect for themselves and for doing something else. And.... it helps them" (Mark).

Thus, some individuals found the bottom up, user-led nature of the SE very satisfying in the sense that seeing the results of their own labour gave them a rare feeling of 'ownership' of the product. Mark, for example, noted that this was something different from other places he used to work in:

"Well, if I fix a bike, you know, and it comes in here and it's all broken and it doesn't work and then I can fix it so that it works again, that's a..... that's an achievement I can.... I can see. That's a result....a feeling of achievement, a feeling that I've done something worthwhile. It's good... The more people that cycle the better, in my opinion, especially in a big city like here. There are far too many cars and lorries and..... yeah, I'm doing something..... done something useful".

Linked with this, most homeless people noted that their previous lack of confidence was linked to an awareness of their low skill level and fear of the working environment because of a long period of unemployment. Significantly, they often commented that they had been helped to overcome this fear of working due to support from SE staff, and had more confidence in what they could manage. Marcel, for example, noted:

"...well, I..... in the last few weeks I started to..... three days a week here and that's the first time in a number of years now that I've..... I've been able to maintain without feeling that I'm over-burdening myself and I can cope with it and, yes, there have been problems but..... um..... I managed to speak to them to increase my days. Sometimes I come twice a week, sometimes three times a week."

As noted earlier in this discussion, some service users derived an emotional and psychological benefit from the 'voluntary' status of their SE work, feeling that this meant that they were 'giving something back' to the community and could feel a sense of positive self-worth from this. Equally, however, there were some homeless people who found that their volunteer status in a specialist SE project posed challenges to fulfilling their emotional goals, which were to build relationships or friendships with people who were not homeless. Thus some interviewees felt that being a volunteer without paid work, and therefore still being dependent on state benefits, created barriers to 'inserting' themselves into new circles and networking with new people on a basis of equal dignity. Karl stressed:

“If they offered me a job now I’d take it. I’d sign off the dole today. I don’t want to be on the dole no more. If I ‘ad another source of income coming I’d given them the dole book back and tell ‘em to stick it, because it’s not worth being on the dole, know what I mean? I want to be a normal person, whatever normal is, to meet new people out there. You know what I mean?”

A rather different point was also linked with the volunteer-dependent nature of these SEs. One SE front-line staff member noted: *“we have fifty volunteers who are collecting the food, sorting it, making up the orders, loading up the vans and delivering it. So...the actual physical work is done by volunteers”*. Related to this, some interviewees mentioned that it was difficult to establish an affiliation with project peers because of the high turnover of homeless volunteers. Jimmy stressed that:

“...people come and go. So it’s difficult to get into a set routine and you do this on one day, you do this another day..... because so many people have got to learn different aspects of it just simply because they come and go.”

To sum up, there was extensive evidence from these service user interviews that the case study employment-focused SEs were effective in strengthening the social and emotional capabilities of homeless people, although this was truer of SEs with a social emphasis than those with a more business orientation. In particular, it was clear that the self-confidence, self-respect and positive self-perception of many homeless people had been enhanced considerably by their involvement in the SE. Some homeless people’s abilities to establish and maintain meaningful social relationships with peers in the workplace, friends, and extended family members also appeared improved. This is consistent with the views of service providers’ discussed in Chapter 5. Yet, there were still some apparent limits to the social and emotional empowerment achievable via this model, in particular it could be difficult for homeless people volunteering in SE projects to build new relationships with people who had not experienced homelessness.

Creative and Intellectual Empowerment

The creative and intellectual empowerment domain relates to a person’s capabilities in relation to developing his/her own ‘true self’ as a human being in terms of creativity, learning and intellectual activity of one’s own choice, and spirituality and inner development.

As noted in Chapter 5, service providers did not articulate creative and intellectual dimensions of empowerment as a significant dimension of the contribution that their SE could make to the well-being of the homeless people they worked with. In contrast to these service providers, however, homeless service users often explained that finding meaningful and constructive ways to spend their free time, including engaging in a range of hobbies and various aspects of 'self-development', was something they would very much value if they had the opportunity to do so (see Smith, 2008). For example, Sam explained:

"..you know, I'd like to go to the gym more or even go to a..... or take up the guitar.... you know, do guitar lessons or just take up some form of course. Other than that I just tend to go home and watch telly."

A few interviews, such as Kenneth, were already engaged in social activities in their spare time: *"...in my spare time, like at week-ends, I play football. I like playing football so..... I play football at week-ends"*. However, in the main, service users expressed dissatisfaction with this aspect of their lives. Tony, for example, noted that he was attempting to engage again with a 'normal' social life and wanted to take up hobbies as one means to become a member of mainstream society: *"Er... I'm trying... I'm trying to... I'm trying to sort something out at the minute 'cos I do need to do summat in me spare time..."*. He then stressed that he would love to go *"swimming, reading; doing quite a lot of running... meeting friends for coffees, things like that. Just building back a social life again"*.

Meanwhile only one participant made explicit his keenness to engage in activities associated with spiritual development, but, significantly, this participant stressed the role this had played in enabling him to avoid his previous drug-focussed life on the street:

"One day I read a book on Buddhism and like the first page I was reading, I was like, 'I've experienced some of that. I've experienced that. I've 'ad that as well.' The more...I was like narrow me down to a 'T' and then I start reading more like...I went to the first Buddhist meeting and since then I've done it since. I've many occasions...when I'm meditating. It beats any drug, meditating. I can switch off from all the noises. I switch on and off...I can just sit there and meditate ...feel myself floating, know what I mean? I've

read... I've read quite a few books of Buddhism and... there's quite a few books where I've read more than once because it is a good book to read, so I read it again. See it was quite a nice book to read..." (Homeless person, Bill).

Bill stressed that this inner development helped him to change his circle of friends *"...I got a better network of friends as well. They're not criminals"*. Significantly, he also emphasised that it strengthened him not only to overcome his drug issues and retain his place in the SE project, but also to be more sensitive to other people and to respond appropriately if they needed support from him. He explained this in the following way:

"...because with Buddhism you don't pay for anything. It's given, given to you, know what I mean. It gets sent to you as a gift. You don't know what I mean? That's like throwing it back in your face. But, no.... it's helped.... it's calmed me down more plus I 'elp people out as well, with my Buddhist as well. I 'elp people out. I'm more thinking, thinking of people's feelings and how they feel and react on what I say or do. So I think more now before I act, which is a good thing. Before, I would just act before thinking. know what I mean?"

To summarise, this creative and intellectual dimension of empowerment appears as significant as any other empowerment domain to homeless people themselves, even though it was not emphasised by any of the service providers interviewed. Nonetheless, the evidence from 'on the ground' illustrated that, again, SEs with a social rather than business emphasis created the most favourable environment for homeless people to realise their aspirations to be involved in meaningful activities in their spare time, which in turn enabled some of them to pursue their creativity and inner development. While this was not an explicit aim of these socially-focused SEs, it was a highly positive 'unintended consequence' and its importance to the successful re-integration of homeless people should not be underestimated. In particular, these examples demonstrate that the enhancement of a person's capabilities in this domain might be very empowering in overcoming complex issues such as drug addiction. The potential for SEs with a social emphasis to promote the creative and intellectual empowerment of homeless people may be enhanced if they did so more explicitly and consciously.

The 'Difference' Social Enterprise Makes

As noted in the introduction, a key research question considered in this study was whether the fact that these projects were SEs, rather than traditional charities and/or purely commercial enterprises, made a difference to the experiences and/or perspectives of service users.

It is certainly the position of many service providers that it does make a difference. As discussed in Chapter 5, senior managers working in SEs with a business emphasis argued that the business setting and individual self-help ethos of their projects distinguished them from traditional charitable approaches in ways which were empowering to homeless people, as it combated a '*dependency culture*'. This is also in line with the justification given to the strong promotion of SEs at a political level (see Chapter 2).

However, the interviews conducted in this study gave the lie to this notion of a sharp distinction between SEs and traditional charitable approaches, at least from the perspective of service users:

"...it doesn't make any difference, not to me personally. As far as administration goes an' that I don't know. I don't do any administration. I'm not on that side of it. It's just a more hands-on thing I'm rather than, er, the administration side of it." (Jimmy)

"...it doesn't make a difference whatsoever whether it's a social enterprise or not; as long as it's helping people, you know, that's all that matters. Even if you only help a couple of people out of the ones who pass through.....then that's enough." (Steve)

"...it doesn't make any difference to me because... it's like charity... I see it like..... I see it like..... you helping people" (Mark).

In fact, in most instances it became clear that service users were unaware that the project they were engaged with was a SE, rather than a charity (regardless of whether the SE was a social or business focused SE), and when this was explained by the author, without exception they maintained that this made no difference to them (again irrespective of the social or business orientation of the SE). For instance, Martin said:

"So I'm not very sure of a social enterprise, voluntary, charity... To me, it doesn't make any difference. It's just something to be done".

On the other hand, several people in SEs with a social orientation stressed that the atmosphere in these projects was very different to that in commercial organisations in which they had worked (this was less clear cut with the business orientated SE). In particular that there was less workplace pressure and the staff attitude was more supportive and encouraging:

"We're.... we're not being chased to, um, make money all the time, if you know what I mean. We're not being put under pressure by that way. You know, of course we're out there to make as much as we can to put back into the project but, you know, we're not given specific targets to hit or being put under kind of pressure that, that, way" (Tony).

"I think that's a good..... er..... to let people start to get involved in a project or in the community; where it's not always about making as much money as possible. It's more about working together. That's how I understand it". (John)

"It's not the type of atmosphere you get in some work places where..... everyone expects you to know what you're doing. It's not like that. If you don't know what you're doing you don't 'ave to be scared to ask. Someone will tell you how to do it. Whoever you ask. If they don't know they'll go and ask somebody who does know and get back to you. No..... I enjoy working here". (Alex)

Another service user, Mike, explained: *"it was important for me that... it wasn't a purely business for profit... that it had a social aspect to it but it doesn't matter to me that it's a charity or a social enterprise".* Thus, from a service user perspective, SEs - certainly those with a social orientation - were viewed as being closely aligned with traditional charities but very different from mainstream commercial organisations. This was universally viewed as a good thing by the service users interviewed:

"See, in a [mainstream] job situation..... it's a case of you've got to follow the company line. In a [SE] situation like this you can branch off into any different

direction you want to, you know. You could either, like, go for starting your own place ...” (Compton).

“...it’s a totally, totally different aspect to working in a normal work environment where you have to go by company laws, I would not work in a commercial company” (Steve).

In fact, insofar as SE did have an ethos more closely resembling that of mainstream commercial businesses, this was sometimes considered problematic. For example, a frontline staff member in a SE with a business focus, who was himself an ex-homeless person, explained why his view of the benefits of a business focus differed from that of his manager's:

“...One guy who didn’t complete from the first group, whose life just became far too chaotic. He was trying to work but he was also trying to sort out a big problem with his housing, a big problem with his family, with I think a child, and a big health problem, and it was just all too much. He couldn’t work and do all that at the same time. So that’s one example. There are also other examples where people have just wandered away”.

As has also been noted at numerous points in the preceding discussion, the positive benefits associated with participation in employment-focused SEs were much more readily found in those SEs with a social rather than business emphasis. These findings have important implications for Kazakhstan, as discussed in Chapter 8.

Conclusion

This chapter has suggested that employment-focused social SEs were effective in many aspects of the social and emotional empowerment of their homeless service users, somewhat effective with respect to bodily empowerment (particularly the enhancement of mental health), but much weaker in the economic empowerment domain (especially with respect to financial independence). The political aspect of empowerment, as opposed to the economic one, was articulated by neither service provider nor any of the homeless people interviewed in this study. This was consistent with previous literature which has indicated that a lack of bodily empowerment and the acuteness of their needs may limit homeless people's ability to promote their interests in political platforms

(Kennedy and Fitzpatrick, 2001). Whilst, the evidence presented in Chapter 5 suggested that SE service providers totally overlooked the creative and intellectual capabilities of homeless people, these aspects of empowerment were noted as being equally as significant as other empowerment dimension by homeless people themselves. It seemed that SEs with a social emphasis had the potential to promote the social, creative and intellectual development of homeless people; this was currently taking place ‘informally’, and unintentionally, ‘on the ground’.

Interestingly, almost all of the positive empowerment benefits of SEs for homeless people, particularly the strong benefits noted in the social and emotional realm, were found far more readily in SEs with a social emphasis, rather than those SEs with a business focus, which proposed employment models offering greater individual self-help and responsibilities. For homeless people, as with service providers’ perspectives discussed in Chapter 5, this distinction between social and business focused SEs was far more relevant than whether these SEs were embedded or integrated SE models.

More fundamentally, this research suggests a clear mismatch between service providers’ conceptualisation of SE noted in Chapter 5, and homeless people’s understanding of the case study projects. Ultimately, for homeless people, it appeared to make no difference if a project was a SE or charity as long as it provided a positive working environment and supported them to fulfil their life aspirations. This chapter suggested that homeless people identified that the principal source of empowerment came from the supportive work environment and staff attitudes towards them, and also in some cases mutual self-help amongst homeless service users, rather than the acquisition of a job or training in and of itself. That said, a sense of ownership through seeing the fruits of one’s own productive labour could also have a powerfully positive impact in the emotional and psychological realm. As noted above, benefits in the domains of bodily, economic, and creative and intellectual empowerment were more limited, and they were non-existent in the political realm.

Clearly there were limits to the extent that employment-focused SE models can empower homeless people. Homeless people indicated that their reliance on state benefits during their course of volunteering or being a trainee meant a continued financial dependency which constrained their opportunities to become involved in mainstream social networks and societal activities. Moreover, those living in isolation in

hostels struggled to leave behind their previous lifestyle and to network with people who had not experienced homelessness. This chapter has also demonstrated that there were cases when projects failed to provide a wide enough choice or level of skills development to satisfy homeless people's desire to gain access to various types of jobs.

More broadly, this chapter reinforces the point that empowerment for this group is not about work for its own sake, but rather how this enables the promotion of their “human functioning”. Here, importantly, as maintained by Nussbaum (2000, p. 221), “...we cannot satisfy the need for one of them [these capabilities domains] by giving a larger amount of another one” (see Chapter 3). Thus, the empowerment process is a multi-dimensional and holistic one which should be pursued through enhancing individuals’ capabilities in all of the life domains that they value, and one cannot prioritise one over another. This means that personalised assessments of homeless individuals’ needs to take into account the whole person’s life, not just their problems but also their strengths. It also means that one must look at the potential SE role in the homelessness field practically, with an awareness of the limits to its efficacy as noted above, and without unrealistic expectations of its ability to empower people.

Part Three: Lessons for Kazakhstan

Chapter 7: The Economic, Social, and Homelessness Context in Kazakhstan

Introduction

As noted in Chapter 1, this study has been carried out with the ultimate purpose of identifying potential lessons for Kazakhstan that could be drawn from British employment-focused SE projects in the homelessness field. With this in mind, this chapter provides an overview of the socio-economic and homelessness context in Kazakhstan. It begins by describing the country's political, economic and welfare systems. It then outlines the nature of single homelessness in Kazakhstan, drawing on the very limited evidence base available, before describing the role of Government and civil society originations in addressing this problem. Specific attention is given to the current role played by SE organisations in the homelessness field in Kazakhstan.

Country Background

Kazakhstan is a landlocked country bordering with Russia to the north, China to the east, adjoining Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan to the south, and with the Caspian Sea to the West. In December 1997 the capital was moved from Kazakhstan's largest city, Almaty, located in south-east of the country, to Astana, which is geographically located in central Kazakhstan. The Government's vision is to keep Astana as the political and administrative centre of the country and to develop Almaty into the business and financial 'hub' of the Central Asia (Yertysbayev, 2001).

Kazakhstan's population is approximately 16 million. It is an ethnically diverse country, but with a dominance of ethnic Kazakhs (64%) and Russians (28%), with the remaining population comprising mainly Koreans, Ukrainians, Germans and Poles (Agency for Statistics, 2007). The population of Kazakhstan practices many religions, but with a dominance of Islam and Orthodox Christianity. The official state language is Kazakh, but Russian is equally used in official communication. However, in 2007 the Kazakh government declared the promotion of a tri-language policy, meaning that instruction is now given in Kazakh, Russian and English in all educational institutions (Nazarbayev, 2007).

Political Transition from Soviet Communism

Kazakhstan appeared as an independent state on the world political map on 16th December 1991, after having been ruled by the Russian Empire since the 19th century, and by Soviet Russia since the early 20th century. President Nursultan Nazarbayev has been the first and only ruler of Kazakhstan since the country became independent. According to some writers (Dubnov, 2012), Nazarbayev has solidified his power base over the past 20 years and has established an authoritarian political regime that effectively guarantees his rule. However, he has taken part in elections three times, the last one in 2010, and his current presidential term ends in 2016. Political opposition is weak and the President's party "Nur-Otan" is dominant in the national parliament. Some have argued that the Kazakhstan political system is similar to Singaporean 'authoritarian-democracy', with a strong presidency which allows little political freedom but allows for some form of economic openness (Yertysbayev, 2001). Such analysis remains controversial, but there is little doubt that corruption remains a major problem in Kazakhstan, which ranking 95th out of 178 countries on Transparency International's corruption perception index (Transparency International, 2008).

Economic System: the Transition from a Centrally Planned Economy to Market Economy

Since independence in 1991, Kazakhstan has implemented a wide range of economic reforms in banking, land privatisation, inspection regimes, tax policy and small business development, amongst other areas. As the Kazakh-British Chambers of Commerce (2009) notes, after a period of economic decline and high inflation in the 1990s, in 2000 Kazakhstan became the first former Soviet republic to repay all its debts to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), seven years ahead of schedule. In March 2002, the U.S. Department of Commerce 'granted' Kazakhstan 'market economy' status under U.S. trade law (Kazakh-British Chambers of Commerce, 2009). This change in status recognised substantive market economy reforms in the areas of currency convertibility, wage rate determination, openness to foreign investment, and government control over the means of production and allocation of resources.

In September 2002 Kazakhstan became the first country in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS, a union of 11 out of 15 ex-Soviet countries) to receive an investment-grade credit rating from the major international credit rating agency

Moody's (Moody's, 2002). It experienced the fastest economic growth in the region, enjoyed as a result of social and economic reforms. With an average GDP growth rate of around 8.5 % since 2000, the country has been listed among the fastest growing economies of the world and has outpaced all other Central Asian states by far.

The main factor underlying this economic success has been the high demand for oil and gas resources in the international market, as Kazakhstan has the 9th largest oil reserve in the world (5.3 billion tons). The country's reserves account for 3.2% of world proven reserves of oil and 1% of gas (KazEnergy, 2010). As well as oil and gas resources, Kazakhstan has the world's largest chrome reserves and the world's second largest uranium reserves, third largest zinc reserves, and fourth largest lead reserves (KazEnergy, 2010).

Table 7.1 portrays the GDP of Kazakhstan and its ranking internationally (World Bank, 2012). By way of illustration, it indicates the GDP per capita of three selected developed countries (the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom), four (other) post-communist 'transition' states (Hungary, Russia, Kazakhstan and Ukraine), and three developing countries on the African continent (Sudan, Kenya and Malawi). Table 7.1 also indicates these countries' international ranking in GDP per capita according to the Index Mundi, where Kazakhstan was ranked 94th out of 226 countries worldwide (CIA World Fact, 2012). This indicates that Kazakhstan's GDP per capita is considerably lower than that of the developed countries, but much higher than that of African countries. In comparison with the other post-communist states, Kazakhstan's GDP per capita is lower than in Hungary and Russia but much higher than that in Ukraine.

Table 7.1 GDP per capita by 2012

| | Countries | GDP per capita (PPP) (US \$) | International Ranking: Index Mundi |
|----|-------------------|---|---|
| 1 | United States | 49, 000 | 12 |
| 2 | Canada | 41, 100 | 21 |
| 3 | United Kingdom | 36, 600 | 34 |
| 4 | Hungary | 19, 400 | 62 |
| 5 | Russia | 17, 000 | 70 |
| 6 | <i>Kazakhstan</i> | <i>13, 200</i> | <i>94</i> |
| 7 | Ukraine | 7, 300 | 134 |
| 8 | Sudan | 2800 | 174 |
| 9 | Kenya | 1800 | 194 |
| 10 | Malawi | 800 | 217 |

Source: CIA World Factbook (2012, p.15)

The recent global economic crisis has hit Kazakhstan's economy (World Bank, 2012). Since mid-2007, in response to the economic recession, the government of Kazakhstan has developed anti-crisis measures targeted at stabilising the financial sector as well as supporting other sectors such as agriculture, manufacturing and industrial infrastructure (Massimov, 2012). The central priority of current economic policy is to diversify the economy, that is, to strengthen the non-oil industries to reduce the country's dependence on natural resources. However, there is little success to note so far in this regard (Abilov, 2011).

Despite issues with corruption and limited political freedom, Kazakhstan ranks among one of the more attractive developing countries for foreign investments according to

rankings which analyse the level of accessibility to the market and the legal environment for business investors. For example, within the World Bank's "Doing Business" (2012), Kazakhstan was placed 47th out of 183 countries worldwide. By 2009, the three largest foreign investors in Kazakhstan were the United States (USD 32 billion), Netherlands (USD 30 billion) and the United Kingdom (USD 14.1 billion) (Kazakh-British Chambers of Commerce, 2009).

The Welfare System in Kazakhstan

This section outlines what might be broadly described as the 'welfare system' in Kazakhstan. It covers welfare benefits, pensions, health care, education and housing sector. It also reviews the role of civil society organisations in the welfare system in Kazakhstan.

Welfare Benefits

The welfare benefit system of Kazakhstan is based on a 'triad' model which embodies: first, a cash transfer system funded by the national government; second, a contributory social insurance system; and, third, a voluntary insurance system.

Firstly, cash transfer benefits in Kazakhstan include both 'status' benefits and 'means-tested' benefits. Status benefits are aimed at, for instance, disabled people, single mothers, widows of soldiers and families with large numbers of children. Means-tested benefits are aimed at poor people whose average per capita income does not exceed the 'poverty line' (UNDP, 2000). This 'poverty line' is identified by the Kazakh Government, and was fixed at USD 47 per individual per month in 2012. It should be noted that the level of this 'means-tested' benefits is very low in comparison with the cost of living in bigger cities in Kazakhstan such as Almaty, Astana and Atyrau (Atabayev, 2012; Duysenova, 2012).

To illustrate this point, Table 7.2 provides a comparison of purchasing power parity in a selection of countries to indicate the number of US dollars needed, as of June 2012, in to buy the same representative basket of consumer goods and services that would cost 100 USD in the United States (OECD, 2012; Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of Kazakhstan, 2005). This data demonstrates that it is very difficult for people in

Kazakhstan to live on 47 USD per month, as this is more or less equivalent to an individual in the UK living on £53 per month (with no additional housing or other cash benefits).

Table 7.2 Purchasing Power Parity in June 2012

| Countries | Representative basket of consumer goods and services that would cost 100 USD in the United States |
|-------------------|---|
| Poland | 63 USD |
| <i>Kazakhstan</i> | <i>76 USD</i> |
| Hungary | 74 USD |
| United Kingdom | 130 USD |

Sources: Duysenova (2012, p. 4).

The second type of benefit is based on social insurance, with funding accumulated through an employers' deduction of 5% from employees' monthly salary. This is used to pay unemployment benefit to insured employees who lose their job (International Labour Organisation, 2011). However, a person can only claim this unemployment benefit if he or she has worked for at least six months and their employer has forwarded the requisite salary deduction to the state-owned insurance company. Long-term unemployed people and those who have just left the education system are not, therefore, eligible for unemployment benefits (Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, 2005).

Third and finally, the 'voluntary' social insurance system is available for those who want to purchase insurance privately in the commercial sector.

Pension System

Kazakhstan's pension system comprises a dual model, with both non-contributory and contributory elements. The non-contributory pension system covers individuals who started work before the collapse of the USSR: they receive a cash transfer from the state. In 1998, the Government introduced a contribution-based scheme for younger workers (UNDP, 2000). Under this newer contributory scheme, individuals must transfer 10% of his/her work salary on a monthly basis to either to a private pension

fund or to the state fund. This monthly transfer is legally obligatory for those in employment (International Labour Organisation, 2011), and people who are unemployed and unable to make this monthly pension contribution are left unprotected.

Health care

Kazakhstan provides universal access to health care services free at the point of use for the whole population (Healthcare Ministry, 2011). This sector is, therefore, 'de-commodified' in Esping-Andersen's (1990) terms, at least to a certain extent, meaning that access to these facilities is not directly linked to people's income levels or participation in the labour market. However, in practice the utilisation of Kazakh health services varies widely, with only 6% of Kazakhstan's poorest citizens, versus 16% of the richest, recorded as having sought medical attention in the previous six months (World Bank, 2012). These lower health care utilisation rates by the poor suggests that they may not obtain services that they need, delay medical treatment, and or do not undergo preventive checkups. There are also private health services available in Kazakhstan which are expensive usually unaffordable for low-income people.

Nonetheless, Table 7.3 below indicates that Kazakhstan's health outcomes are reasonably good in international comparative terms, with a higher than the global average for immunisation against infectious diseases, immunisations against measles, and the availability of sanitation. However, the country's infant mortality rate is higher than the global average.

Table 7.3 Legatum Prosperity Index by 2010: Health

| | Kazakhstan | Global Average |
|---|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Rate of immunisation against infectious disease | 99.00% | 91.20 |
| Rate of immunisation against measles | 99.00% | 90.50 |
| Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births) | 29.10 | 22.60 |
| Sanitation (% of population) | 97.00% | 78.70 |

Source: Legatum Prosperity Health Index (2012, p. 2)

Education

The education system is also 'de-commodified' in Kazakhstan, with primary, secondary, tertiary and higher education funded by the state and accessible to every citizen (Education Law, 2011), although admission to higher education is competitive and one must pass the Universal National Test in order to be enrolled at universities and colleges. There are also private schools available.

While Kazakhstan's overall public expenditure on education was, at 3.9% of GDP, lower than the OECD average of 6% in 2011 (Zhumagulov, 2011), its educational outcomes are impressive: in 2007 it was ranked fourth out of 128 countries worldwide on the UNESCO Education Development Index. This reflected Kazakhstan's achieving universal primary education (99%), adult literacy (99.6%), and gender parity in education (99.3%). This educational ranking in fact placed Kazakhstan ahead of most developed economies (UNESCO, 2010, p. 285).

Kazakhstan's higher education institutions, however, are not top ranking in international terms and lag well behind those of developed countries (The Times Higher Education, 2012). Attempts are being made to improve the ranking of Kazakhstan's higher education sector and several western-style universities with English language instruction have been established, managed and staffed by US, British, Canadian and Japanese administrators, researchers and lecturers (Matthews, 2012; Nazarbayev University, 2012).

Housing

Unlike education and health sectors, housing is not de-commodified in Kazakhstan. Thus Kazakhs have to meet their housing needs largely in the market, though this is of course also true in most developed countries (Bengtsson, 2001; Stephens, 2011).

There is no data available on tenure structure in Kazakhstan¹, however it is known that 3% of all housing stock is state-owned. This state-owned stock is used to accommodate disabled people and war veterans, as well as allocated as tied accommodation to state

¹ The availability of data on tenure structure was explored in a telephone conversation with the press officer for the Housing Agency of Kazakhstan, who informed the author that there is a plan to develop such statistics in the near future in collaboration with the Kazakhstan Agency of Statistics.

employees (Housing Stock of Kazakhstan, 2012). The remaining 97% of housing stock is privately owned, some of which is rented out and some of which is occupied by the owner (data are not available to reflect what the balance is between renting and owner occupation). Such official statistics that exist on housing in Kazakhstan do not take account of illegal self-build housing, but this is thought to be a substantial sector.

The main government intervention in housing in Kazakhstan is a nationwide scheme predominantly aimed at what in the UK would be called 'key workers', e.g. public sector workers such school teachers, police officers and medical professionals. These key workers are eligible for financial help to buy a home. The underlying rationale for this housing programme is to support public sector workers who are first-time buyers and unable to afford to buy a property without subsidy. While it is therefore a highly targeted scheme, the significance of the programme is that it provides at least some low-cost housing countrywide. In fact, the scheme thus far has provided approximately 11% of all current housing stock in Kazakhstan (Housing Stock of Kazakhstan, 2012). The key worker programme began in 2005 and has been divided into three time phases, the final one of which is scheduled for completion in 2014.

It is important to emphasise that this 'key worker' housing scheme does not target the poorest people in Kazakhstan. Thus in the welfare system in Kazakhstan there is no state intervention designed to meet the housing needs of disadvantaged households, either in terms of direct provision of housing or of a cash housing allowance to enable them to meet their housing costs in the market.

The Role of Civil Society Organisations in Kazakhstan

The discussion above has mainly focused on the role of the Kazakh state in providing for the welfare of its citizens. However, there are also civil society organisations which actively operate in the welfare arena in Kazakhstan. These civil society organisations have played a significant role, on the one hand, in advocacy to improve state social services, and on the other hand, have taken part in delivering in-kind welfare support for the most disadvantaged in Kazakhstan. Atakhanova (2005), a leading antinuclear environmental activist in Kazakhstan, noted that while the government were preoccupied with the transfer of free market economic models from the developed world in the post-communist transition period, social and environmental reform was neglected and civil society organisations have attempted to fill this 'vacuum', making an important contribution to transferring

welfare practices from the western world into Kazakhstan.

Civil society organisations are said to have provided the catalyst for the development of 129 social partnerships, 110 issue-based coalitions, and 135 advocacy campaigns in Kazakhstan between 1994 and 2002, at both national and local levels (Counterpart International, 2008). There are also a whole host of international agencies - including the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), World Bank and the European Commission - which have contributed to the institutional development of local NGOs in different fields in Kazakhstan.

In 2003 the growing significance and contribution of civil society organisations in Kazakhstan was (indirectly) recognised for the first time by the Kazakh government, which initiated the National Civic Forum. After this Forum, the national Cabinet Office and each local authority set up a section for civil society in their administration to facilitate a better understanding of the concept, role and contribution of not-for-profit bodies amongst civil servants and decision-makers. By 2012, there were more than 5,000 not-for-profit organisations in Kazakhstan operating in various social service fields, including those working with disadvantaged groups such as homeless people (CSSI, 2010). We return below to the specific role that SEs and other civil society organisations play in addressing homelessness in Kazakhstan.

Homelessness in Kazakhstan

This section discusses the nature and prevalence of homelessness in Kazakhstan, insofar as the very limited data available allows, and also current responses to homelessness by the state, charities and SEs.

The Scale and Nature of Homelessness in Kazakhstan

There is no research or statistical data available on single homeless people in Kazakhstan. The only public source of information on these issues is occasional media reports. Given these highly limited sources, the author conducted a number of consultative discussions with well-placed observers in Kazakhstan representing local government, night shelters, journalists and homelessness charities and SEs. A total of seven consultative discussions were undertaken, with the participants selected based on the author's own contacts and knowledge having worked in the homelessness field in Kazakhstan. While this represents an extremely limited and 'unscientific' source of data,

these discussions did help to contextualise the homelessness issue in Kazakhstan beyond the researcher's own personal observations and knowledge.

Several themes emerged from these consultative discussions.

The first theme related to the ethnicity of single homeless people in Kazakhstan. For example, the project officer of a Kazakh homelessness charity noted that the backgrounds of single homeless people in Kazakhstan are diverse, but that ethnically European white people (Russians, Ukrainians, Belarusians) were more predominant than Asians (Kazakhs, Koreans, Uzbeks and others). This is perhaps due to the support networks available within local Asian cultures, which helps to stop people being 'pushed' into a life on the streets. However, this pattern is now said to be changing as the traditional support role played by these kinship networks weakens as a result of economic development.

Secondly, a number of consultees commented that homeless people typically experience multi-dimensional and complex problems. According to senior staff of the Homeless People Centre in Almaty (see further below), for example, most of the single homeless people they work with face a combination of non-housing issues including unemployment, drug and alcohol misuse, and physical and mental health problems. A TV journalist who has undertaken reports on homelessness remarked:

"Certainly the first thing which made these people homeless is the absence of a roof over their heads and the fact that they are unemployed. We see that their shelter is the street and they stay in the trash areas to collect something to eat as they do not have access to normal, safe food. But this is only the visible part of the story. We met people who were depressed because of divorce and they think that their family is ashamed of them because they are begging on the street. I mean they have a very low feeling of dignity and self-confidence and therefore where possible they use any opportunity to consume a lot of alcohol to avoid the difficulties they face. Almost all of them suffer from health problems of different types. They are sometimes beaten by hooligans on the streets, so this also causes physical health problems".

Thirdly, a number of the observers noted that the educational level of single homeless people tends to be low, although there are a few cases where well qualified people have ended up on the street. The project officer of a homelessness charity, for example, noted the strong belief that single homeless people are illiterate or poorly educated, which she conceded is mostly the case, but she had also encountered a small number of ex-doctors and engineers in the course of her work.

Fourthly, some observers highlighted the paucity of knowledge about the wider aspirations of single homeless people. A local TV journalist explained:

“Once I just stopped in the street and asked them what they think about some policy makers' idea to force them to do voluntary job. However, it was interesting to get to hear their life aspirations during the conversation”.

This journalist shared unpublished interview quotations from a single homeless person who stressed that: *“I am not an outcast from society, what I want is just a small corner to house myself... then I want to get married and live with my family happily ever after. That is what I dream”*. This is consistent with an earlier newspaper article where a homeless ex-prisoner interviewed on the street explained: *“...yes, it is just great to have a small ‘corner’ of accommodation but I actually want to get married, to ‘create’ family and to live happily ever, as everybody else”* (Gani, 2010).

Responses to Homelessness in Kazakhstan

There is no national strategy designed to address homelessness in Kazakhstan, however local schemes have been developed. Most notably, Homeless People Centres have been set up by local authorities in 12 Kazakh cities. As noted above, there are also civil society organisations operating in the homelessness field, including SEs, as now discussed.

Homeless People Centres

Homeless People Centres in 12 Kazakh cities provide between 60 and 300 short-term temporary beds for rough sleepers (for up to three months), and soup kitchen facilities and basic healthcare services. The number of temporary bed spaces available is highly restricted, and the demand from homeless people wishing to use this accommodation is

said to far exceed capacity during severe weather in winter (Centre for Homeless People, 2012).

The Senior Manager of the Almaty Centre for Homeless People noted that the Centre also performs a much wider role, including assisting homeless people to renew their personal identification documents, and providing them with the proof of address that is necessary to access the welfare benefits, medical care and other state services. They further noted that: “Homeless people are additionally encouraged to return to the locality where they come from originally and costs are covered by the Centre for Homeless People”. In these 'reconnection' interventions, attempts are made to link single homeless people back with their family in their original community.

More relevant in the context of this thesis is that, since 2010, the social welfare department of Astana city administration has prioritised employment integration for homeless people, attempting to ‘force’ their Homeless Centre’s service users to do various voluntary jobs as a 're-integration tool' (Gani, 2010). To promote a similar approach at a national level, a round table meeting was organised in the capital city Astana in 2010. This initiative has also found support amongst some members of the National Parliament who have asserted that employment should be the main tool to ‘force’ homeless street people to re-integrate into mainstream life (Gani, 2010).

One of the key factors underlying this 'compulsory work' initiative is the perception that single homeless people lack a work ethic. One of the participants in the stakeholders' round table also argued that legally forcing homeless people to work would help them to ‘leave’ public spaces and attempt to ‘normalise’ their life (Medelbek, 2012). The local authority representatives agreed upon the necessity of focusing on the work facilitation of single homeless people through Centres for Homeless People as a result of the stakeholders’ round table. Astana local authority representative felt that their employment scheme was a positive way to address the homelessness issue:

“I had no doubt that to engagement of single person into a job is a something that had never suggested previously, I mean discussed in such round table publicly to address urban homelessness... So I was quite optimistic that we would find a support amongst stakeholders nationwide”
(Gani, 2010, p.1).

Likewise, a Kazakh government representative stressed in the media:

“Employment is the key factor which will help single homeless people to get back to mainstream life. This issue and suggested work approach to tackle single homelessness in bigger cities had not been raised before. Importantly one should focus on development work ‘life’ for single homeless people. Actually they [homeless people] do not have a proper job experience and employment is an important step to normalise their life” (Zhakupov, 2010).

It should be stressed that, currently, Kazakhstan’s local and central government's understanding of the role of employment in helping homeless people move out from their disadvantaged position does not explicitly focus on endeavouring to 'empower' this group.

Charities and Social Enterprises in the Homelessness Field

There are no official statistics or data published on the number of homelessness organisations in Kazakhstan. The author of this research worked in Kazakhstan’s not-for-profit sector for three years and can verify the shortage of specialist homelessness projects. However, there are various health, drug and alcohol rehabilitation centres dealing with vulnerable people in their projects, many of whom may be homeless, without stating a clear mission targeted at addressing homelessness.

There are two main charitable organisations with a specific homelessness mission in Kazakhstan: Caritas Kazakhstan and the Teresa’s sisters’ Homeless Centre. Both of these organisations are affiliated to the Catholic religion and function under the umbrella of Caritas International, a global confederation of 164 Catholic organisations which seeks to promote human development and combat poverty internationally (Caritas Kazakhstan, 2011).

Both Caritas Kazakhstan and the Teresa’s sisters Homeless People Centre were founded in 1998 to help the most vulnerable Kazakhs, with a particular focus on homeless people. The Teresa’s sisters Centre provides a limited number of beds (50), and concentrates mainly on providing short-term shelter, soup kitchen facilities and basic healthcare, as well as help in accessing medical care, social benefits and job search for homeless people.

There are also currently two SEs in the homelessness field in Kazakhstan. These are both micro-crediting projects, based in Almaty city, called “Baspana” (Shelter) and “Moldir” (Transparent). As is well known, the main objective of micro-crediting initiatives is to bring financial services to poor populations (Pytkowska and Ratai, 2007). Micro-crediting is used to develop lending mechanisms that do not depend on the collateral, credit history, and loan guarantees that the formal banking sector requires. By forming small groups whose members are jointly liable for each individual’s loan, the micro-credit policy creates a form of social collateral to substitute for material assets (Moldir, 2010).

The micro-crediting SE Baspana was set up in 2006, and provides training on self-employment and construction of low-cost self-build houses for homeless people (Micro Finance, 2007). As noted by a senior manager in Baspana, this decision was based on maintaining the financial sustainability of the organisation. Malikov (2012), the founder of Baspana, argues that: “...our approach is a social enterprise one and this is very different from previous traditional models in the non-governmental sector. This is a path which developed countries NGOs use to sustain projects”. While Kovtunova, a Deputy Director of Kazakhstan’s Association for Civil Society Development, pointed out the significance of the development in particular employment-focussed SEs in homelessness field:

“Work-based social enterprises in homelessness field as well as in any other fields is a trend widely developed in many countries across the world, this is a chance for homeless people to access a job. In fact it is also an ‘innovative’ organisational strategy for financial sustainability via trading services or any type of product in the market. I know homelessness organisations such as Baspana quite well, however Kazakh social enterprises should be very proactive to develop this route” (Counterpart International, 2008, p. 23).

Likewise, the project manager of employment-focussed SE in the homelessness sector in Kazakhstan believed that SE was a major element of financial independence from grant funding: “SE provides an approach to establish ‘independent’ budget from grant funding” (Moldir, 2010, p. 12).

This perception of SEs as 'very different' from charitable organisations - and capable of providing cross-subsidy to the social activities of charities - was of course discussed in the UK context in earlier chapters, and is an important theme we return to in Chapter 8.

Moldir evolved from its parent (non-commercial) homelessness organisation in 2003. It aims to increase employment and entrepreneurship amongst low-income, unemployed people, including homeless people, by providing them with access to microcredit services. Moldir's social and micro-crediting projects co-exist and continue to offer credit to homeless self-help groups to enable them to maintain the social entrepreneur support model (Moldir, 2010). However, since the economic recession started in 2008, Moldir has attempted to broaden its focus to the wider population but, unlike Baspana, continues to work with the homeless population too. Moldir has no funding or contracts from government, something which poses financial challenges for the organisation, and also the motivation to focus on its enterprise function.

Conclusion

This chapter has provided an overview of Kazakhstan's economic, political, and welfare systems. It has highlighted that the country has experienced strong economic growth, due to its rich mineral resources, particularly oil and gas, even though corruption remains a significant concern. This economic growth has allowed for the investment of resources into Kazakhstan's pensions, health and education systems, but means-tested benefits remain at a very low level and there are no housing programmes available for disadvantaged households.

This suggests that 'safety net' available to those who may find themselves homeless in Kazakhstan is likely to be weak. In the absence of formal research data or evidence, a series of consultative consultations were held with well-placed observers of homelessness in Kazakhstan to supplement the author's personal knowledge of homelessness in the country. These consultees indicated that in Kazakhstan, as in the UK, single homeless people experience complex disadvantages and support needs associated with poor physical and mental health, alcohol and drugs misuse, vulnerability to violence and abuse, unemployment and poverty.

This chapter also described responses to homelessness in Kazakhstan, noting that there are no relevant national strategies or programmes developed by central government.

However, there is state funding made available for city administrations to establish Homeless People Centres which provide short-term accommodation and other basic services. Particularly interesting in the context of this PhD, is that Kazakh policy makers have increasingly been emphasising access to employment as one of the policy responses to urban homelessness in Kazakhstan, with some local authorities even promoting attempts to ‘force’ homeless people into voluntary jobs. At the same time, but in parallel, ‘SE’ has been initiated by bottom up non-for-profit organisations as one response to homelessness in Kazakhstan. SEs operating in the homelessness field have argued that the generation of income through a business oriented-model is a viable approach to address this issue.

These recent developments in Kazakhstan suggest that there is much to be gained from exploring whether lessons might be learned from the relatively well-established employment-based SEs in the UK, which have sought to address single homelessness through an empowerment model. The next chapter turns to this question of the prospects for policy transfer from the UK to Kazakhstan in this field.

Chapter 8: Policy Transfer and Potential Lessons for Kazakhstan

Introduction

This chapter identifies possible lessons for Kazakhstan drawn from this study of employment-focused SE projects in the homelessness field in the UK, discussing which approaches would be most appropriate and effective in the Kazakh context. In so doing, it ‘intersects’ with the concept and challenges of international ‘policy transfer’, and therefore the chapter begins by reviewing the literature on policy transfer, and highlights the ways in which the current study attempts to avoid some of the well-established pitfalls of this process. The potential lessons for Kazakhstan are then presented in two categories: first, general lessons related to the overall definition and structure of SEs as a vehicle for meeting welfare needs; and, second, more specific lessons with respect to the scope for empowering homeless people using employment-focused SE models.

Policy Transfer: Challenges and Pitfalls

International policy transfer has been defined as the ‘importation’ of a model or policy from one country to another ‘recipient’ country (Dolowitz, 2003; Stone, 2004). Dolowitz and Marsh (2000, p.5) understood policy transfer as:

“...a process by which ‘knowledge about how policies, administrative arrangements, institutions and ideas in one political setting (past or present) is used in the development of policies, administrative arrangements, institutions and ideas in another political setting’”.

International policy transfer is one subset of policy transfer. Rose (1993, p.21) describes international policy transfer as “a program for action based on a program or programs undertaken in another city, state, or nation...”.

The literature indicates that there are two main mechanisms of policy transfer: ‘coercive’ and ‘voluntary’ (Dolowitz, 2000; Evans, 2004). Coercive policy transfer involves external influence being exerted on the recipient (usually developing) country by supra or transnational structures, or by more economically developed or more politically

powerful countries. However, this study focuses on voluntary policy transfer which Evans (2006, p. 481) describes as:

“...a rational, action-oriented approach to dealing with public policy problems that emerge[s] from... the identification of public or professional dissatisfaction with existing policy as a consequence of poor performance...”.

Voluntary policy transfer usually reflects a ‘bottom up’ civil society-inspired process, taking as its starting point some disquiet about current ‘on the ground’ conditions (Pawson and Davidson, 2008). Key actors in recipient countries may then look to other countries with similar problems and attempt to draw ideas to stimulate thinking on how to address the issue in their own context. As Rose comments (1991, p.4):

“...every country has problems, and each think that its problems are unique...However, problems that are unique to one country...are abnormal...confronted with a common problem, policy-makers in cities, regional governments and nations can learn from how their counterparts elsewhere responded. ...The concerns for which ordinary people turn to government... are common in many countries”.

Despite its obvious utility, there are a number of interlinked challenges, constraints and pitfalls in the policy transfer process which are now well documented in the literature (Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000; Page, 2000; Benson, 2009; Pawson and Hulse, 2011).

First, as Dolowitz and March (2000) note, there may be ‘uninformed transfer’ when the borrowing country may not have full information about the policy and how it works in the original country, or detailed knowledge of the broader contextual factors which may be necessary to its successful operation. Such uninformed transfers are more likely to lead to policy failure, as emphasised by Pawson and Hulse (2011 p.3):

“...when ideas are imported across national boundaries in a way that involves little analysis or knowledge enhancement... this ...often amounts to little more than ‘mimicking or copying’, increasing the risk of policy failure”.

Overall, as Rose (1988, p.78) pithily notes: “the more information agents have about how a programme operates in another location the easier it is to transfer”.

Second, there may emerge a ‘scale of change’ constraint whereby some policy transfers - in order to be successful - require macro-scale structural change in the recipient country, and may have multi-dimensional, complex and far-reaching characteristics that can reduce the efficacy of any attempted transfer (Page, 2000; Dolowitz, 2003). The particular challenges of macro-scale transfers arise in part from the “...requirement to change institutions or structure... [as] institutions are notoriously ‘sticky’, restructuring may be infeasible” (Benson, 2009, p.9). Such macro-level transfers are particularly likely to encounter barriers associated with: ‘path dependency’ from previous policy patterns, and potential resistance from policymakers who may be ‘invested’ in the status quo; political, cultural, and value incompatibilities between the recipient and exporting countries; and a lack of economic capacity on the part of the recipient country to cover both the transitional and/or operational costs associated with the new approach (Page, 2000; Benson, 2009; De Jong, 2009). Rose (1993, p.135) supports this point that “the scale of change required to accommodate a programme is also constraint” and stresses that “...small-scale change is easier to achieve than wholesale restructuring”. This all suggests that micro-scale transfers focusing on targeted population subgroups may be more feasible than larger-scale transfers.

Third, and finally, there are also challenges related to policy transfer ‘fit’ at a more detailed level. In particular, it is vital that the ‘problem’ identified in the recipient country is as closely equivalent as possible to ‘the problem’ addressed by the relevant intervention in the exporting country (Dolowitz and Marsh, 1996; Page, 2000).

In the current study there was an attempt to deal systematically with each of the challenges and constraints of policy transfer noted above. Taking these in reverse order, from the (admittedly limited) evidence provided on single homeless people in Kazakhstan in Chapter 7, it was suggested that the experience of complex issues such as physical and mental health problems, alcohol and drugs misuse, vulnerability to violence, and unemployment is broadly similar to that found in the single homeless population in the UK. It was in view of this need for ‘problem equivalence’ insofar as possible, that the author chose to focus the study on single homelessness (where there are indications of similarities between Kazakhstan and the UK) rather than family

homelessness (which is less visible in Kazakhstan and there may be fewer parallels with the UK).

Second, and crucially, this study concerns the potential for micro-scale change focussed on a relatively small subgroup of the population - single homeless people - rather than macro-level change that would require major reform of the Kazakh economy or social structures. While there are undoubtedly fundamental differences in political, ideological cultural contexts between the UK and Kazakhstan, at the detailed 'technocratic' level of policy discussion pursued in this thesis, such issues are less controversial than with respect to major social reforms. Furthermore, there are, as noted in Chapter 7, some civil society groups and key actors in Kazakhstan who have expressed dissatisfaction with the existing response to homelessness who are potential 'allies' in the policy transfer process and may help to overcome relevant 'policy resistance'. As also noted in Chapter 7, Kazakhstan's strong economic growth in recent years allows for an adequate level of resources to be devoted to politically prioritised interventions, particularly those on a relatively small-scale such as this.

Finally, the dangers of 'uninformed policy transfer' - or at least an uninformed proposal of policy transfer - are mitigated by the author having conducted a sustained three-year doctoral study of the relevant interventions in the UK context, while at the same time having detailed knowledge of the relevant policy structures and context in Kazakhstan where these policy lessons may potentially be 'applied'.

Lessons for Kazakhstan

As noted above, the range of potential lessons for Kazakhstan arising from this evidence on the British experience of SEs is divided into two categories: first, general 'organisational' level lessons related to the overall definition and structure of SEs as a vehicle for meeting welfare needs; and, second, more specific lessons with respect to the scope for empowering homeless people using employment-focused SE models, drawing directly on homeless people's experiences and perspectives as articulated in my fieldwork interviews.

Social Enterprises: Organisational Lessons

As noted in Chapter 7, Kazakhstan's homelessness SE practitioners tend to argue that core to the SE concept is the idea that this is first and foremost a business whose

income generation function enables it to sustain the viability of social projects, and that this makes SE a fundamentally different model from that of traditional voluntary organisations.

In contrast, the current research suggested that there were quite distinct roots of understanding the term SE in the UK homelessness sector, with the key division identified between those SEs with a 'business' emphasis and those with a more 'social' emphasis. This distinction in emphasis in turn tended to arise from the origin of the SE. As noted in Chapter 5, if the founder of the SE had a professional business background, and he/she had invested a significant amount of his/her own private capital into the project, these SEs tended to have an ethos similar to that of a private company. Other SEs, on the other hand, evolved from charitable organisations and tended to place overriding emphasis on the social component of their work, with an ethos very similar to that of a traditional voluntary organisation. Yet, both of these types of organisations call themselves SEs and claim to promote social values.

From this one can note that Kazakh conceptualisations of SE tend to be akin to those British ones which place a heavy emphasis on a business ethos. This is highly relevant in the discussion below about how different types of UK SEs - those with a business or a social focus - are experienced by their service users and their effectiveness in empowering homeless people. Therein lies important lessons for Kazakh civil society organisations as they develop the SE model in this field (see further below).

Also striking in the UK was the realisation that there were SEs in the homelessness field which identified with neither a business nor a social focus but rather from an 'presentational' perspective found the SE 'label' expedient in fitting with government commissioning and other agendas. In these cases, the concept of SE was something which was more linked to external communication with funders and partners rather than with a particular approach to the services provided to homeless people. This also might be an important lesson for Kazakh policy makers in that caution may be required about the emphasis to be placed on SEs in supporting civil society interventions on social issues, as this may disadvantage some traditional charitable organisations which could then simply re-label themselves as SEs for tactical reasons.

There may also be a general lesson to be drawn from consideration of the gap between the 'official definition' of SE in the UK and the reality of their operation as revealed in

this research (at least as regards those operating in the homelessness fields). As noted in Chapter 2, the British government assumes that SEs aim to generate an income to be reinvested in the pursuit of social objectives (DTI, 2002). However, in practice many SEs in the homelessness field had evolved from existing charities (Teasdale, 2012a). This illustrates the interconnectedness of SE and charity models, and suggests that SE practitioners and other interested parties should avoid ideologically contrasting SEs with traditional charities.

Moreover, as noted in Chapters 2 and 5, the income sources of UK SE in the homelessness field are diverse and they often use a 'cost-transfer' strategy to subsidise their 'enterprise' elements, with this subsidy being sourced from a combination of government grants, charitable reserves, and also, very often, the state benefits received by their 'workers' (who are generally unpaid volunteers) (Teasdale, 2012a). This means that, in reality, the subsidy sometimes flows in precisely the opposite direction from that envisaged in the official definition of SE - i.e. the charitable arm of the organisation may well be subsidising the 'enterprise' element. It also means that SEs do not (at least in the short-term) free their service users from 'welfare dependency', but rather such continued reliance on state-funded benefits is an integral part of their business model.

While this 'cross-transfer' strategy helps to mitigate tension between the income-generating and social objectives of SEs - i.e. by taking the 'pressure off' in terms of competing on equal terms with truly commercial organisations - it clearly raises some important issues with respect to the gap between rhetoric and reality in the operation of UK SEs. It certainly suggests that Kazakh policy makers should be realistic in terms of the likely market competitiveness of SEs (if unsubsidised). The full reliance of SE projects on their earnings in the market may therefore not be possible and central government may want to consider granting funding for both charities and SEs alike, at least to cover projects' social components, particularly given that the very low level of welfare benefits available to unemployed people in Kazakhstan places severe limits on this as a potential source of SE subsidy (that is vital in the UK context). This likely requirement for grant subsidy further reinforces the need to avoid contrasting the role of one particular type of civil society organisation with another with excessive policy expectations (Teasdale, 2012b).

The next section moves on to look more specifically at potential lessons for Kazakhstan's employment projects in the homelessness field that may be drawn from this study of relevant UK SEs.

The Empowerment of Homeless People

It is important to emphasise that, currently, Kazakhstan's local and central governments' 'vision' of the role of employment in helping homeless people move out from their disadvantaged position does not explicitly focus on endeavouring to 'empower' this group. Rather, there is a somewhat vague aspiration to 're-integrate' them into mainstream society, with the moral emphasis mainly on what is in the best interests of society as a whole (i.e. that everyone of working age should have a 'work ethic' and make an appropriate contribution to increasing prosperity in Kazakhstan).

It is the contention of this thesis that a more systematic approach to such re-integration would focus on empowering homeless people as ends in themselves, using the 'capabilities' framework as a means of recognising both human heterogeneity - in particular the varying support needs and 'conversion factors' that mean some people require more help and 'resources' than others in order to achieve the same level of 'functioning' - and also the range of domains of human flourishing that are core to the realisation of a 'good life' (Sen, 1992, 2004; Nussbaum, 2000). The complex and varied support needs typically found amongst single homeless people make such a multi-dimensional and person-centred conceptual framework particularly apt in assessing the contribution made by projects seeking to aid their empowerment (Teasdale, 2010a).

The key question is, thus, how homeless people's participation in the work provided via SEs may promote their 'substantive freedom' to achieve key aspects of human flourishing, bearing in mind Nussbaum's (2000, p.81) critical insight that each of these domains of flourishing are separate and "...we cannot satisfy the need for one of them by giving a larger amount of another one". It is from this capabilities-driven perspective that consideration will now be given to the practical lessons that might be drawn from the experience of British SEs in empowering homeless people in Kazakhstan. As elucidated in Chapter 4, classic accounts of empowerment were integrated with key capabilities domains in order to develop the conceptual framework underpinning this thesis which focuses on: bodily empowerment; political and economic empowerment; social and emotional empowerment; and creative and intellectual empowerment. We

will now examine the potential lessons for Kazakh policy makers related to each of these empowerment domains in turn.

Bodily Empowerment

Chapters 5 indicated that service providers in UK SEs perceived that work may help to achieve the 'bodily empowerment' of homeless people via: enhancing their physical and mental health; facilitating their access to safe and secure living accommodation.

There was some evidence from the interviews with homeless people that involvement in work provided by SEs had had a positive impact on at least some homeless individuals' bodily empowerment, specifically by helping to improve their mental health and their resistance to substance misuse which were mainly characteristics of SEs with a social orientation. However, the examples also suggested that people's ability to meet basic needs for living in a safe area was not fulfilled irrespective of the social or business emphasis of SEs. Likewise there was no evidence of SEs of either type assisting participants to meet other basic needs, including access to healthcare. Significantly, the source of these beneficial impacts seemed not to be the job itself, but rather the supportive work environment, particularly the staff's attitude toward them. This was more characteristic of those SEs with a social than a business emphasis, meaning that the former appeared to contribute more successfully to the bodily empowerment of homeless people. This means that both Kazakh policy makers and SE practitioners should not view the employment model as a panacea for all issues. Rather, they need to consider additional funding of social support components to be directly integrated into employment schemes, and to provide a diversified, person-centred approach, depending on the complexity of the problem the homeless person faces.

Political and Economic Empowerment

SE managers in the UK tended to emphasise the potential for the work activities they provided to enhance the economic empowerment of homeless people (via enhanced skills, training, 'work readiness' and (ultimately) financial independence) but to make no comment about any potential for political empowerment. Likewise, in Kazakhstan, as noted in Chapter 7, policy makers highlighted the importance of the economic dimension of re-integration (i.e. the re-integration of homeless people via the development of a 'work ethic') while the political dimension was not noted at all.

With respect to economic empowerment, there were a number of important lessons to emerge from the UK study which could have relevance for all parties operating in homelessness field in Kazakhstan: policy-makers, Centres for Homeless People, and the existing SEs which are increasingly commercialising their activities.

On the positive side, it was clear that homeless people did often acquire enhanced skills and confidence through their training and work experience which undoubtedly contributed to their economic empowerment, or at least the potential for such empowerment. Yet limited opportunities to earn money were noted as a major weakness of economic domain by participants.

Crucially, however, these positive benefits were, as with bodily empowerment, more characteristic of SEs with a social emphasis than of those with a business emphasis, because it was easier for the former than the latter to create a supportive environment for its service users. This reinforces the point that Kazakh policy makers should maximise the funding opportunities for SEs to help them to diversify their income sources and resist pressing budget constraints that require an overwhelming 'business' emphasis.

As noted in Chapter 7, Kazakh policy makers have advocated encouraging (even forcing) the active involvement of single homeless people into 'voluntary' (i.e. unpaid) jobs. The British experience of SEs showed that this focus on voluntary work has a number of advantages when it comes to homeless people, namely that it provides flexibility in terms of working hours and there are also fewer responsibilities for vulnerable (sometimes chaotic) people to embrace. However, this research also illustrated that some homeless people were not happy with their volunteering status, in the sense that it did not 'free' them from a reliance on state benefits or enable them to be financially independent. Rather, as noted above, some SE employment projects used the voluntary labour of homeless people to capture cost-transfer from state benefits in order to sustain their project operations (see also Teasdale, 2012a). This also reinforces the need for Kazakh policy makers to avoid shifting the entire financial responsibility of the social support component of such employment models to Homeless People's Centres or SEs in the homelessness field, as it is highly likely that subsidy will be required, particularly given the very limited scope for cost-transfer from state benefits in Kazakhstan, as noted above.

Another interesting implication of the UK fieldwork findings was that SEs in Kazakhstan might want to consider ‘incubating’ and supporting the development of ‘bottom up’ user-led projects. Lessons learnt from the British context suggest that homeless people benefited particularly from such bottom-up projects established by an ex-homeless person because they create: first, a sort of seeing-believing motivational example for them to improve their lives, offering a positive 'role model' for change; and second, that such a 'peer' project manager can have a better idea of how to build trusting relationships with people who have been through similar experiences. In turn these factors may help to motivate other homeless people to engage in entrepreneurial activities, possibly even establishing their own business as a small-scale self-employment initiative as would be directly consistent with the mission statement of Kazakh SEs such as Baspana and Moldir (see chapter 7).

With regard to the apparent neglect of political empowerment by British SEs, it should be stressed that a number of homelessness scholars have already cautioned that the pressing housing, health and other basic needs of homeless people may constrain their ability to prioritise wider aspects of their social inclusion such as political participation (Kennedy and Fitzpatrick, 2001). The current study re-affirmed this finding, with the political aspect of empowerment, as opposed to the economic dimension, not a key priority of any of the homeless people interviewed. This should highlight for Kazakh policy makers and civil society organizations the interrelationship between bodily empowerment and wider forms of empowerment in the homelessness field.

Social and Emotional Empowerment

The social and emotional dimension of empowerment entails being able to interact meaningfully with other people on the basis of equal dignity and self-respect. The social networks that are relevant could involve a partner, children or members of an extended family, as well as (homeless) project 'peers' and friends outside of work and homelessness hostels. As noted in Chapter 7, there are indications in Kazakhstan that, as in the UK (Johnsen & Fitzpatrick, 2010), homeless people articulate their aspiration to ‘create’ or re-connect to their own family as a particularly important source of emotional empowerment. Service providers argued that work-focused SEs empower homeless people by promoting their social and emotional life domain.

There are several potential lessons on social and emotional empowerment from this UK study that may be applicable in the Kazakh context, specifically in relation to Homeless People Centres and civil society organisations that work with homeless people. On the positive side, the research indicated that some homeless people did indeed attribute an increase in their sense of self-worth and self-respect to their participation in work activities within SEs, and in some cases networking with their peers, mutual learning and collective self-help in the SE project was also reported to enhance this beneficial effect. Significantly, some people's self-respect improved once members of their extended family perceived their occupation positively. The homeless people, however, pointed out that a supportive atmosphere in their workplace was the main precondition of these positive impacts, and as we have noted this tended to be characteristic of SEs with a social rather than business emphasis.

However, the UK research also illustrated that some homeless people engaged as volunteers in SE employment projects encountered challenges to accomplishing their emotional goals with respect to building relationships or friendships with new people, outside of the homelessness 'scene'. Homeless people stressed that voluntary work, though it provided an alternative to inactivity, still meant being dependent on state benefits, which created barriers to socialising themselves into new circles with confidence and to networking with new people on an equal level. As a result, this made it difficult for them to strengthen their self-esteem further, which limited their opportunities to fully integrate themselves into mainstream societal networks and activities. This means that both Kazakh policy makers and civil society organisations - keen on the reintegration of homeless people into mainstream society - should not perceive social and emotional empowerment as something abstract and irrelevant, but rather should give priority to the internal sense of self-worth of homeless people.

Creative and Intellectual Empowerment

Creative and intellectual empowerment relate to a person's capabilities in relation to developing his/her own 'true self' as a human being in terms of creativity, learning and intellectual activity of one's own choice, and spirituality and inner development.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, this study suggested that British SEs did not articulate this empowerment domain as significant at all in their work with homeless people. However, this does not mean that Kazakh policy makers should similarly neglect this

domain. On the contrary, a key finding emerging from the UK study was that this creative and intellectual dimension of empowerment was considered as significant as any other empowerment domain by homeless people themselves, even though this was not true of service providers.

This evidence from 'on the ground' illustrated that, again, SEs with a social rather than business emphasis created the most favourable environment for homeless people to realise their aspirations to be involved in meaningful social activities in their spare time, which in turn enabled some of them to pursue their creativity and inner development. While this was not an explicit aim of these socially-focused SEs, so can be seen as a positive 'unintended consequence' that arose accidentally and informally from their work, its importance to the successful re-integration of homeless people should not be underestimated. To take just one example, during the course of a British case study a homeless person noted that his reading and engagement in Buddhism had helped him to resist a life of drugs on the street and leave behind his circle of criminal acquaintances. Examples such as this suggest that, in fact, enhancing and realisation of creative capabilities can be as important a sphere of empowerment for homeless people as any of those discussed above; a lesson that UK as well as Kazakh SEs would do well to take on board.

Overall Lessons on Empowerment via Employment-Focussed Social Enterprises

While the discussion above focuses on the ways in which UK SEs have enhanced (or not) the empowerment of homeless people in specific domains, here we summarise some overall lessons for Kazakhstan to emerge from this UK study on the empowerment of homeless people via SEs.

The first and most obvious relates to the increased commercialisation trend within Kazakh SEs, with the ever greater promotion of individual self-reliance of homeless people within these projects. However, the results of this UK study suggest that the major source of the positive empowerment impact of SEs on homeless people came from those with a social rather than business emphasis. From this perspective, the overarching lessons drawn from the UK experience for the Kazakh policy makers are that SEs with a social emphasis rather than business ethos are likely to be most effective in terms of empowering homeless people. Furthermore, the research suggested that self-

help as an element of collective learning and development of homeless social networks was more typical to SEs with a social emphasis rather than SEs with a business focus.

This was reinforced by the experience of some homeless people with chaotic lifestyles who were engaged in employment projects with a business-like emphasis - pursuing a typical individual self-help, responsibility and self-reliance ethos within the workplace - and who were not able to meet project requirements and failed to retain their places in the project. This evidence is consistent with the views of other scholars, who have noted that SE models, where it is assumed that, in contrast to charities, they are not supposed to carry out a 'social work' function towards their clients, might encounter difficulties in working with homeless people with acute issues (Tracey and Jarvis, 2007; Teasdale, 2010a; Teasdale, 2012a). Thus SEs with social focus enhanced collective self-help (at least sometimes), whilst the SEs with business emphasis focused on promotion of homeless people's individual self-help which was often unrealistic.

This relates to the pattern that emerged across all of these empowerment domains that it was the positive impact of a supportive work environment rather than the work itself that tended to facilitate positive empowerment outcomes for homeless people. The author systematically assessed whether this positive impact was characteristic of all case study projects or depended on certain SE models, and the findings made clear that such positive working environments were found far more readily in SE projects which originated from charities (and therefore had a social emphasis) than from those which had a more business-orientated origin and ethos.

Also linked with this, and cutting across all of the domains above, the UK study indicates that Kazakh local authorities should also be particularly cautious about forcing homeless people into 'voluntary' jobs. The coerced nature of such schemes makes it less likely that such work environments will be perceived as supportive, and therefore the beneficial empowerment outcomes are unlikely to be experienced.

Even where engagement in work activities is genuinely voluntary, Kazakh policy makers should have a clear understanding of the limitations of voluntarism in empowering homeless people. Such voluntary employment could, for some, be as much of a trap as a help, particularly for those who lived isolated in hostels, stuck in this homeless 'circle', and found it very hard to relate to the people outside that small

community, not least because the unpaid status of their work constrained their capacity to participate in many social aspects of mainstream society.

Another key finding with resonance in Kazakhstan is that, perhaps surprisingly, the evidence provided by homeless people in the UK showed that it did not make any difference for them whether their employment project operated as a SE or as a charity - in fact they often struggled to distinguish between the two - as long as it helped them to move on in their lives. Thus, this means that Kazakh authorities may want to avoid contrasting SE with traditional voluntary projects, and rather stress the interdependence of their approaches, particularly to promote cooperation between SEs and Homeless People Centres and other interested civil society stakeholders.

A final overall point that all of these findings point to is that the value of work in this context is not for its own sake, but rather about how it enables the promotion of “human functioning”, and employment for homeless people is valuable and effective insofar as it does this across a range of dimensions of human flourishing. This again, means that Kazakh policy makers should think carefully about how their employment approach works cross-dimensionally with a range of empowerment aspects in order to enhance the capabilities of homeless people across distinct (though inter-linked) domains.

Conclusion

Prior to outlining lessons learned from the British SE context in the homelessness field for Kazakhstan, this chapter reviewed the literature on international policy transfer. In so doing, it highlighted that the type of 'voluntary' policy transfer considered in this thesis tends to be prompted by dissatisfaction with existing policies in the 'recipient' country. Policy transfer can undoubtedly be a useful tool in addressing social problems across international boundaries - as such problems are rarely unique to any one country - but the literature also outlined that there are a range of potential challenges and pitfalls in international policy transfer that must be borne in mind. These relate to the dangers of 'uninformed transfer', the 'scale of change' required for successful transfers and transfer 'fit' and 'problem equivalence' issues. However, the chapter attempted to demonstrate that such challenges have been adequately addressed in the current research by: the sustained nature of the UK study, and the in-depth knowledge of the Kazakh context held by the author; the enhanced feasibility of a micro-scale policy

transfers impacting on relatively small population subgroups such as homeless people; and the indications of relevant 'problem equivalence' between the UK and Kazakhstan, notwithstanding profound differences in the wider socio-economic context.

This chapter then proceeded to consider the key potential lessons that could be derived from this UK study for application in the Kazakh context. First, lessons of a general organisational nature were considered. Primary amongst these was the insight that Kazakh policy makers and practitioners should avoid contrasting SE as drastically 'innovative' approaches as compared to traditional voluntary organisations. Rather evidence from the UK showed that these approaches tend to be interrelated, not least because SEs often evolve out of traditional charities and remain imbued with their ethos. However, perhaps more fundamental was the finding that a 'cost-transfer' subsidy strategy is often used by SEs, with this subsidy sourced from government grants, charitable reserves, and the state benefits received by their 'workers' (generally unpaid volunteers) (Teasdale, 2012a). Thus, in direct contradiction to UK official assumptions, subsidy often seems to flow from the charitable arm of organisations into their 'enterprise' arms, and also SEs do not (at least in the short-term) free their service users from 'welfare dependency'. This suggests that Kazakh policy makers should be realistic in terms of the likely market competitiveness of SEs (if unsubsidised), and they may want to consider grant funding for charities and SEs on a similar basis, at least to cover both types of projects' social components which have been shown to be so important in the UK case (see below).

There were a range of potential lessons drawn from the British context for Kazakh policy makers with respect to the potential of work-focused SEs to promote the empowerment of homeless people. In particular, while there was evidence that participation in the work activities provided by SEs had a positive impact on the bodily empowerment (particularly mental health), economic empowerment (particularly skills and work-related confidence), and social and emotional empowerment (enhanced self-respect and sense of self-worth) of at least some homeless people, this was attributable not so much to the employment itself but to the supportive work environment that was provided. Such a supportive work environment was found far more readily on SEs evolved from traditional charities, and had a predominantly social rather than business ethos. Homeless people with chaotic lifestyles who were engaged in SE projects with a business emphasis, on the other hand, often struggled to take on the high level of

individual responsibility and 'self-help' that this implied and sometimes failed to sustain their places in the project.

Thus, the research suggests that, out of the two main SE approaches, those models that emphasise a social ethos seem far more promising as regards the empowerment of single homeless people with complex support needs than those that emphasise a business model. This requires re-thinking of the current move in Kazakhstan towards the promotion of employment and SEs with business emphasis as a key driving force of in the re-integration of homeless people. It also raises serious questions about the position of Kazakh politicians who have advocated 'forced' voluntary jobs for homeless people: such coerced engagement in work is unlikely to lead to the supportive work environment that is so important to positive outcomes.

Even where engagement in unpaid work projects within SEs is truly voluntary, Kazakh authorities should be aware of limitations in its potential for empowerment. For example, some homeless people were not comfortable with their volunteering status, particularly with the fact that this fails to enable them to be financially independent. Also, for some homeless people, unpaid employment in such projects could be as much of a trap as much as a help, if one promotes it in 'isolation' without a cross-dimensional outlook that promotes 'flourishing' across a range of spheres of their lives, including the opportunity to engage with people outside of the homelessness 'world' in a meaningful and positive way.

Thus a key message for Kazakhstan is that employment on its own is unlikely to be effective in empowering homeless people, rather thought has to be given to how to combine work opportunities with the social support they need to help them to cope with the complex life difficulties they face. A multi-dimensional empowerment process is needed, and this study showed that, though neglected by UK practitioners, enhancing homeless people's capabilities in the creative and intellectual sphere may be just as important an element in empowering them to move on with their lives as any of the other empowerment domains noted above. While each of the empowerment domains must be treated as separate and independently important, as emphasised by Nussbaum (2000), in that surfeit of one capability cannot compensate for a deficit in another, they are at the same time interdependent in that, for example, the meeting of basic physical needs (bodily empowerment) will often be a prerequisite for attaining a realistic

prospect of functioning in another domain (such as political or economic empowerment). This means that Kazakh policymakers and civil society organisations in the homelessness field should not neglect the inter-relatedness of these empowerment dimensions.

While it was not the main purpose of this thesis, one could add that there were a number of lessons for Kazakh SEs and government policy arising from this study. In particular, there appear to be some questions to be addressed about the 'added value' of the SE model in social policy fields such as homelessness given that a) as Teasdale (2012a) has already established that SEs seldom appear actually to be profitable (but in fact have business models dependent on subsidy from charitable and public sources, including their 'workers' continued dependence on welfare benefits) (Teasdale, 2012a); and b) whilst this study complements to Teasdale's (2012a) research by adding the following point, particularly that homeless service users appear to derive no additional 'empowerment' or other benefit from their being SEs rather than traditional charities, and in fact the beneficial impacts identified above are strongly associated with those SEs with a 'social' emphasis that most closely resembles the traditional ethos of charitable organisations.

Part Four: Conclusions

Chapter 9: Conclusions

Introduction

Homelessness, particularly amongst single people, has become highly prevalent in major cities in Kazakhstan in recent years, but there are no national strategies or programmes developed by the Kazakh Government to address the issue, albeit that the Government has increasingly been emphasising access to employment as one possible policy response. Dissatisfaction with the lack of effective Government action in this area means that SE models have been promoted by some not-for-profit organisations as a means of responding to the growing homelessness problem in Kazakhstan. But these debates regarding the potential utility of promoting employment and/or SE as solutions to homelessness have occurred in a parallel, and relatively unconnected, fashion.

In a very different context, the term SE has become very fashionable in the UK in recent years, with successive UK Governments promoting the use of SE as a tool to 'empower' disadvantaged people, including homeless people. (DTI, 2002; Spear et al., 2009; Teasdale, 2010a, 2010b, 2012a). Most recently, there has been a growing emphasis on 'self-help', integrated with this focus on SE, which has been particularly linked to the current Conservative-led Coalition Government's notion of the 'Big Society'. (Pattie and Johnston, 2011; Teasdale et al., 2012). Within this Conservative 'Big Society' rhetoric, empowerment means people being self-reliant rather being dependent on the state (Kisby, 2010).

In comparison to Kazakhstan, the UK is considerably further ahead specifically in relation to the promotion of SEs with an employment focus as a response to homelessness. The central theme of this study therefore was to evaluate and understand the empowerment potential of work-focussed SEs in the homelessness field in the UK, with a view to deriving lessons for Kazakhstan.

Developing An Innovative Conceptual Framework

A capability-inspired theoretical approach (Sen, 1992; Nussbaum, 2000) was adopted as a means of operationalising the concept of 'empowerment' in this thesis. In developing this conceptual framework, I integrated classic dimensions of empowerment such as 'economic' (Gist, 1987; Breton, 1994; Larson et al., 2005; Rosenheck et al., 2006),

‘socio-psychological’ (Kieffer 1984; Zimmermann, 1995; Dickerson, 1998), ‘educational’ (Freire, 1973; Lee, 1994; Kincheloe, 2008; Becker et al., 2004) and ‘political’ aspects of people’s lives (Rhodes, 1987; Croft and Beresford, 1992) with an adjusted capabilities list, adapted mainly from the work of Martha Nussbaum (2000). This led me to develop a four-part typology of empowerment domains to apply in this thesis. First is the 'bodily empowerment' dimension, which involves having reasonable physical and mental health; safe and secure living circumstances; and the ability to meet other fundamental physical needs, such as for food and basic healthcare. The second, 'economic and political' empowerment dimension incorporates capabilities such as having the (financial) resources and (political) power to pursue one's own version of the 'good life'. The third, ‘social and emotional’, domain involves a person’s ability to engage in meaningful social relationships on the basis of equal dignity and self-respect, including with peers in the workplace, friends, partners, children, and extended family members. It also relates to the enhancement of an individual’s self-confidence, self-esteem and positive self-perception. Fourth, and finally, the ‘creative and intellectual’ empowerment domain, which is as noted earlier also absent from traditional empowerment literature, includes activities aimed at developing a person’s capabilities in relation to developing his/her own 'true self' as a human being in terms of creativity, learning and intellectual activity of one’s own choice, and spirituality and inner development.

By taking into account the complex issues homeless people face (see chapter 2), this capabilities-grounded empowerment framework was argued to enrich the traditional empowerment debate by better capturing vulnerable individuals’ diversity and uniqueness, the differences in their personal ‘conversion’ factors, and the impact of context on the extent to which homeless people are (or are not) empowered.

The UK Empirical Study

The empirical aspect of the doctoral study had five central research questions:

- How is the concept of *social enterprise* defined and operationalised in the UK homelessness sector?
- To what extent is the concept of *self-help* embedded in UK SE models in this field?

- How, if at all, is the concept of *empowerment* understood by those operating SEs in this field in the UK?
- How effective are *employment-centred* SE models in *empowering* homeless people via enhancing their *capabilities*?
- Does its being a *social enterprise* (rather than a traditional charity and/or commercial enterprise) *make a difference* to the experiences and/or perspectives of its service users?

With respect to how *social enterprise* is understood in the homelessness field in the UK, in reality this was revealed as much more complex than DTI ‘official definition’ implies, in other words that SEs are bodied set up to generate income to be reinvested in the pursuit of social objectives (DTI, 2002). Most fundamentally, SEs in the homelessness field which were established by private investment from a founder with a business background prioritised the business aspects of the project and ‘imitated’ commercial enterprises in their operation. Whereas others, originating from charitable organisations, emphasised social aims and were more akin to traditional charitable or voluntary organisations.

For SEs practitioners in the homelessness field this distinction between social and business focused SEs was far more relevant than whether these SEs were embedded or integrated SE models, as discussed in Chapter 2 (see Alter, 2007; Teasdale, 2012a). Both these types of SEs may take a CIC legal form but it is worth noting that SEs with a business focus - owned predominantly by private founders - could operate much like a commercial business because they use a leasing scheme to avoid being subject to the required ‘asset lock’. Even though a dividend cap of CIC, which limits the material interests of capital investors was in place, the employees involved in the Board of the SE, could take money out as wages. Such circumstances might locate those CIC SEs with a business focus closer to commercial companies. In practice, this challenges the previous UK Labour Government’s attempt to ideologically differentiate SEs from traditional organisations through the introduction of CIC law in 2005 (Social Enterprise Coalition, 2009; Teasdale, 2012b).

Moreover, in reality, many of the SEs involved in the study did not earn surplus through trading but rather used a cost-transfer strategy from various sources, including state resources via the benefits system for disadvantaged people. Some SEs generated enough

income via trading services or products in the market to sustain their own activities, but none of those studied generated enough surplus 'profit' to re-invest back into charitable programmes. The trading income of others was enough only to practically cover their operational costs, and so the SEs required subsidy to keep functioning (the cost transfer strategy). This former case was typical of the SEs in this study with a business focus and the latter for those SEs with a social orientation (though one of these social SEs made no trading income at all). SEs are, in fact, therefore quite hybrid in financial nature and the research suggested that, in direct contradiction of the DTI (2002) concept of a SE, the charitable arm of organisations quite often cross-subsidised the SEs involved in the study (see also Teasdale, 2012a).

There were SEs in the homelessness field which identified with neither a business nor a social focus but rather from a 'presentational' perspective finding the SE 'label' expedient in fitting with government commissioning and other agendas. In these cases, the concept of SE was something which was more linked to external communication with funders and partners rather than with a particular approach to the services provided to homeless people.

This research also suggested that in the homelessness SE field *self-help* is not understood in a single manner but rather in variable ways. In practice, SEs practitioners held very distinct, and to some extent conflicting, objectives with regard to self-help: either enhancing collective learning *or* enhancing individual responsibility. The former position was more typical of SEs with a social orientation whilst the latter was more reflected in SEs with a business focus. Socially-focused SEs felt that individual self-reliance contradicts the principal of collective learning and lateral bonding of a social network, whereas business orientated SEs felt that enhancing individual responsibility was a primary means by which SEs operated to empower the homeless people they worked with.

These two contrasting notions of self-help could be viewed as encompassing very different conceptualisations of *empowerment* amongst SEs in UK, with the business model approach clearly reflecting the Coalition Government's Big Society vision, rooted in a 'consumerist' empowerment model and the promotion of self-help to shape 'responsibilised', active citizens (McKee, 2008; Kisby, 2010). Socially focussed SEs conceived empowerment as the creation of a space for single homeless people to work,

gain experience and to be trained in a supportive and a collective learning environment, whereas SEs with a business focus felt that employment was a way of promoting individual self-reliance. Furthermore, these interviewees from SEs with a business emphasis also thought that their employment project differs from that of traditional voluntary organisations, as business-focussed SEs, according to service providers, provides employment, training and work experience in a real business setting whilst charities focus more on volunteering.

Service providers from both SEs with a social emphasis and a business orientation were united in believing that their employment-focused projects were effective in enhancing homeless people's *bodily* empowerment, specifically via improved mental health and meeting their needs for a safe and secure living environment. Looking at this from the perspective of homeless people, it did seem that participation in the case study SE projects contributed to at least some homeless individuals' bodily empowerment, in particular by helping to improve their mental health and their resistance to substance misuse. This positive evidence was more typical of the social SEs rather than business-orientated SEs, specifically with respect to the supportive work atmosphere facilitated by the project staff and sometimes the collective self-help of co-worker homeless people. However, this study also suggests that a homeless person's ability to meet their need for a safe and secure living environment was not accomplished overall, independent of whether homeless interviewees were involved with a SE with a social or business orientation. In a similar vein, this study did not find any evidence of SEs of either type enabling participants to meet other basic needs, including access to healthcare.

Service providers interviewed generally took the view that employment-centred SE models were effective in empowering service users via promoting their *economic* capabilities, specifically their work skills, soft skills and life skills. These points were noted by both SEs with a social and a business emphasis. SE practitioners further believed that SE projects would improve the financial independence of homeless people.

Again comparing these service provider perspectives with those of homeless service users, it did seem that employment-based case study SEs were effective in empowering homeless people in the economic domain to a certain extent, particularly in developing

their skills through the provision of training and work experience. Homeless people's life skills required to function in the workplace were also enhanced. It was notable that homeless people involved in bottom-up, user-led SE projects - in which the project leaders were ex-homeless people - found this highly motivational.

However, there was some dissatisfaction from homeless people's side that the training content was not tailor made to their level of development and the range of training opportunities afforded was limited. The unpaid volunteer status of most of the work placements was also a source of unhappiness for many participants. These points were common to both types of SE, whether they were SEs with a social or business emphasis. Sometimes SEs did not have enough work to occupy homeless people. Additionally, homeless people with chaotic lifestyles who were engaged in SE projects were not ready to address the challenges they faced and failed to retain their places in the project. This is consistent with the views of some scholars, who noted that some SE model projects might encounter difficulties in working with homeless people with the most acute issues (Teasdale, 2010a).

The *political* domain of empowerment, as opposed to the economic one, was articulated by neither service users nor service providers in this study. This was consistent with previous homelessness literature which has indicated that a lack of bodily empowerment and the acuteness of their needs may limit homeless people's ability to promote their interests in political platforms (Kennedy and Fitzpatrick, 2001).

This research has suggested that SE practitioners believed that employment projects would strengthen the *social and emotional* capabilities of homeless people such as self-confidence, self-respect and positive self-perception. Participants asserted that homeless people's abilities to establish and maintain meaningful social relationships with peers in the workplace, friends, and extended family members would also be promoted via engagement in SE employment projects.

This was confirmed in the interviews with homeless people, which indicated that the key empowerment 'strength' of the case study employment-focused SEs related to enhancing the social and emotional capabilities of homeless people (although this was more true of SEs with a social emphasis than those with a more business orientation). In particular, it was evident that the self-confidence, self-respect and positive self-perception of many homeless people had been strengthened significantly by engaging in

the SE. Some homeless people's abilities to establish and maintain meaningful social relationships with peers in the workplace, friends, and extended family members were also improved. This was consistent with the views of service providers. Yet there were still some clear limits to the social and emotional empowerment achievable through these employment projects, and in particular it could be difficult for homeless people volunteering in SE projects to establish new relationships with people who had not experienced homelessness. Being a volunteer without paid work, and therefore still being dependent on state benefits, created barriers for homeless people to 'insert' themselves into new circles and network with new people on a basis of equal dignity.

Service providers neglected the capabilities related to the *creative and intellectual* domain of homeless individuals when describing their understanding of the empowerment impact of their project on service users' lives. This contrasts strongly with the experience and views of homeless people, wherein creative and intellectual aspects of empowerment featured prominently. Indeed, this study found that creative and intellectual dimension of empowerment seems as significant as any other empowerment domain to homeless people themselves. Nevertheless, the examples from 'on the ground' suggested that, again, SEs with a social rather than business orientation created the most favourable environment for homeless people to realise their aspirations to be involved in meaningful activities in their spare time, which in turn enabled some of them to pursue their hobbies, interests and creativity and, in one case, their inner 'spiritual' development. The study also demonstrated that the promotion of a person's capabilities in this domain might be very empowering in overcoming complex issues such as drug addiction. While this was not an explicit aim of these socially-focused SEs, it was a highly positive 'unintended consequence' and its importance to the successful re-integration of homeless people. The potential for SEs with a social emphasis to promote the creative and intellectual empowerment of homeless people may be enhanced if they did so more explicitly and consciously.

Overall, it became evident that almost all of the positive empowerment outcomes of SEs for homeless people, especially the strong benefits noted in the social and emotional domain, were found far more readily in SEs with a social emphasis, rather than those SEs with a business focus. This distinction between social and business focused SEs

was far more relevant than whether these SEs were embedded or integrated SE models (Alter, 2007; Teasdale, 2012a)

This takes us onto the final empirical research question noted above, which was whether the fact that these projects were SEs, rather than traditional charities and/or purely commercial enterprises, made a difference to the experiences and/or perspectives of service users. In this respect the research suggests that there was a clear mismatch between service providers' conceptualisation of SE and homeless people's understanding of the case study projects. The position of many service providers was that its being a SE *does* make a fundamental difference. Particularly senior managers working in SEs with a business emphasis, strongly maintained that the business setting and individual self-help ethos of their projects differentiated them from traditional charitable approaches in ways which were empowering to homeless people, as it combatted a 'dependency culture' (see chapter 5). This also echoes the justification given to the strong promotion of SEs at political level (see chapter 2).

My evidence, however, suggests that for homeless people, it made no difference whether a project was a SE or charity as long as it provided a positive working environment and supported them to accomplish their life aspirations. As noted earlier, the positive benefits associated with participation in employment-focused SEs were much more readily found in those SEs with a social rather than business emphasis. For homeless people in SEs with a social orientation, the working environment in these projects was very different to that in commercial organisations in which they had previously worked (this was less clear cut with the business orientated SE). In particular that there was less job pressure and the staff attitude was more favourable and encouraging towards homeless workers. The ethos within SEs with a social emphasis seemed to lend itself to project staff spending the time required to help their service users build up the life and technical skills required for the workplace. Thus, from a homeless person's perspective, SEs with a social orientation were seen as closely akin to traditional charities but very different from mainstream commercial organisations. This was universally conceived of as a positive thing by homeless people.

Thus greater effectiveness of SEs with a social emphasis than a business emphasis in the empowerment of homeless people is also perhaps an indication of the fact that the empowerment of homeless people though enhancing their capabilities requires a multi-dimensional approach. Empowerment for the homeless group is not about work for its

own sake, but rather how this enables the promotion of their “human functioning”. And in this process we must pay heed to how to facilitate *all* of the above empowerment domains because, as maintained by Nussbaum (2000, p. 221) “...we cannot satisfy the need for one of them [capabilities domains] by giving a larger amount of another one” (see Chapter 3).

Potential Lessons for Kazakhstan

The ultimate purpose of this doctoral study was to draw lessons for Kazakhstan through an in-depth, qualitative study of British work-focussed SEs in the homelessness sector. A range of important potential lessons emerged, which were filtered through the consideration of the challenges and pitfalls of international 'policy transfer' (Rose, 1993; Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000).

General organisational level lessons for Kazakhstan arising from this UK study related to the definition and structure of SEs, as Kazakh practitioners' current conceptualisation of a SE closely echoes that of the UK Government. However, the reality of SE conceptualisation and operationalisation on the ground in the UK is far more complex than the UK DTI (2002) indicates this being “A business with primarily social objectives whose surpluses are principally reinvested for that purpose...” (DTI, 2002, p. 8).

In particular, a major distinction emerged, as emphasised above, between SEs depending on their origins: namely, SEs with a social focus tended to evolve from charitable bodies, and those with a business orientation originated from SEs with a predominantly commercial company history (usually established by a person from business background with his/her own private financial capital).

However, a crucial characteristic that both types of SE had in common was that none was profitable enough to entirely support the social side of their project, rather they used a cost-transfer from a range of sources, including state benefits, meaning that SEs, in fact, are hybrid in their financial nature (Teasdale, 2012a). In some instances charitable agencies merely re-branded themselves with a SE 'image', using this as a deliberately developed rhetorical strategy in order to accumulate resources from a wider range of stakeholders. This suggests that, Kazakh policymakers and practitioners may be naïve as to expect that earning surpluses by trading services and other products in a

competitive market is a panacea in increasing the financial sustainability of homelessness service provider organisations. In other words, it is unrealistic to expect employment-based SEs at least to be able to reconcile commercial and social goals in any absolute sense (Teasdale, 2012a). Kazakh authorities should therefore avoid shifting the entire financial responsibility for the social support component of employment-based SEs to Homeless People's Centres or to SEs in the homelessness field themselves.

The distinct historical origins of SEs in the UK is reflected in organisational philosophy, with the socially-focussed SEs emphasising collective self-help and mutual learning, whilst business-oriented SEs proposing more individual self-reliance and responsibility shift from the organisation into the project's 'target group'. These conflicting ethos of SEs certainly 'produced' two opposing visions on what empowerment means and how this concept is and should be implemented in practice, irrespective of the fact that both types of SEs are offering an employment project which is a key driving force of empowerment for homeless people. SEs with a social focus believe that empowerment is a space for homeless people to develop of work-related skills and experience in a supportive environment, with an emphasis also on 'lateral' mutual social networking amongst homeless people. In contrast, for SEs with business orientation the concept of self-help is associated with 'shaping' skilled, self-reliant workers with a sense of responsibility, which much more closely resembles the political rhetoric of the current Conservative-led UK Government. Thus Kazakh policy makers should be clear that there are a range of potential models for SEs, and they should think carefully about the type of model best suited to their aims.

Linked with this, important lessons for Kazakh policy makers and SEs also lie in the experiences directly reported by UK homeless people involved in the case study SEs. The practical lessons drawn from the British SEs case studies suggested that the source of improvement in all empowerment 'domains' was not so much the acquiring of a job itself or participation in training, rather it was the supportive work environment, particularly the staff's positive and encouraging attitude toward them. Homeless people made it clear that a supportive working environment was more characteristic of SEs with social emphasis which originated from charities rather than those SEs with business focus. Thus, this means that Kazakh policy makers and practitioners promoting

business-focussed SEs employment models should think again at how effective this will be in empowering homeless people.

One very interesting point to emerge on SEs with a social orientation with potential lessons for Kazakhstan was that those bottom-up 'user-led' SE projects which were set up by an ex-homeless person seemed to work especially well in helping homeless people to gain work experience as it created a 'role model' whereby the project leader motivated them not to miss working days, encouraged them in the enhancement of their practical skills, etc. Furthermore, these 'peer' project leaders had a better idea of how to build trusting relationships with their homeless service users. This in turn, made the project's atmosphere very different from that of commercial companies.

There is a current stress by Kazakh policy makers on encouraging the active involvement of single homeless people into voluntary jobs. Again British practice has interesting light to shed on this, showing that this approach has a number of advantages when it comes to homeless people, namely it provides flexibility in terms of working hours and there are also fewer, and therefore maybe more manageable, responsibilities to embrace for homeless people with complex needs. However, there was also a downside in that in practice some homeless people were not happy with their volunteering status, in the sense that it did not give them an opportunity to 'refuse' benefits they receive and to be financially independent. Rather, paradoxically, as noted in Chapter 6, some employment projects were used the voluntary employment of homeless people in order to cost-transfer from state benefits to sustain project operations (Teasdale, 2012a). This evidence demonstrates that Kazakh policy makers should have a clear understanding of the limitations of voluntarism in empowering homeless people.

It also became apparent that some homeless people with chaotic lifestyles engaged in employment projects were unable to retain their places in the project. This evidence reinforced the views of some scholars, who noted that some SE model projects might encounter difficulties in working with homeless people with the most acute issues (Teasdale 2010a; 2012a). It should be noted that this is mostly an issue in those projects with a business emphasis who justified their reluctance to develop a social support aspect via the notion that their SE was business oriented and in contrast to charities were not supposed to carry out a social work policy toward their clients. However, this

research suggests a clear mismatch between service providers' conceptualisation of SE and homeless people's understanding of the case study projects. Ultimately, for homeless people, it appeared to make no difference if a project was a SE or charity as long as it provided a positive working environment and supported them to fulfil their life aspirations. Homeless individuals appear to source no additional empowerment or other benefit from their being SEs rather than traditional charities, and in fact the positive examples identified in this study predominantly relate to those SEs with a 'social' emphasis that most closely resemble the traditional ethos of charitable organisations. This means that Kazakhstan's service providers and policy makers, and other interested stakeholders should avoid ideologically contrasting SEs with traditional charities.

Fundamentally, this study indicated that Kazakhstan's authorities' vision of the role of employment in helping homeless people move out from their disadvantaged position should explicitly involve empowering people through enhancing their capabilities (Sen, 1992, Nussbaum, 2000). Employment on its own is unlikely to be effective in empowering homeless people: rather a multi-dimensional approach is required to address homeless people's capabilities in four - independently important - empowerment 'domains' (the bodily, the political and economic, the social and emotional, and the creative and intellectual). The evidence presented in this thesis suggests that these sorts of positive empowerment impacts are far more likely to come from SEs with a social rather than business emphasis, and that one has to be realistic about the extent to which social and commercial goals can be reconciled when working with people who have complex needs (Teasdale, 2012a). Perhaps most significantly of all, one should bear in mind that SE, at least in this field, is not a drastically innovative approach which differs from traditional charities, rather these models have interlinking roots and to contrast them in the policy rhetoric in the homelessness sector has little validity.

Contribution and Limitations of the Study

I would argue that this thesis makes three main contributions to knowledge.

First, and most fundamentally, the study attempted to make a theoretical contribution via an enhancement of the 'empowerment' literature. I identified a number of

weaknesses in traditional accounts of empowerment and, through linking the classical empowerment domains with an adjusted 'capabilities' list, sought to enrich and operationalise the concept of empowerment as an analytical framework. Specifically, this enhanced conceptual framework focusses on empowering disadvantaged people as ends in themselves, using the capabilities approach as a means of recognising both human diversity - in particular the varying support needs and 'conversion factors' of the disadvantaged people - and also the range of independent domains of human flourishing that are core to the realisation of a 'good life' (Sen, 1992, 2004; Nussbaum, 2000). This capabilities-grounded, multi-dimensional empowerment framework is argued to be a flexible conceptual tool that is potentially applicable to a range of disadvantaged and marginalised groups with complex and varied support needs.

Second, the study has contributed to the SE literature in a number of ways. Perhaps its most important contribution has been to highlight the profound tensions between 'business' and 'socially' focused SEs in the homelessness field in the UK. This tension was clearly reflected, for example, in their contrasting approaches to employment and the workplace context, with the socially-focussed SEs attempting to provide a supportive, collective learning environment for single homeless people, whereas SEs with a business focus conceived of employment primarily as a means of promoting individual self-reliance. The study has also identified a clear mismatch between service providers' views on the role of the SEs that they run, and homeless people's experiences and perspectives on these organisations. Specifically, for the homeless people, unlike the service providers, it appeared to make no difference if a project was a SE or charity so long as it provided a positive working environment and supported them to fulfil their life aspirations. The study, thus, suggests that contrary to the assertions of some proponents of the social enterprise model, homeless service users appeared to derive no additional 'empowerment' or other benefit from the employment projects in which they participated being social enterprises rather than traditional charities. In fact the beneficial impacts associated with the case study organisations were most strongly associated with those SEs with a social emphasis that closely resembled the traditional ethos of charitable organisations.

Third, this research has outlined a range of practical lessons that Kazakhstan can learn from British SEs' experiences in the field of homelessness. The evidence arising from the UK SE context indicates that Kazakh practitioners' assumptions that SE is a

business model wherein an income generation function enables the sustainment of social projects - making SE a fundamentally different model from that of traditional voluntary organisations - are flawed. In fact, British SEs use a 'cross-transfer' strategy to mitigate tensions between the income-generating and social objectives of SEs. The study suggests that Kazakh policy makers should be realistic in terms of the likely market competitiveness of SEs, and that full reliance of SE projects on their earnings in the market may not be possible. Central government ought therefore to consider grant funding for SEs to at least cover projects' social components, which this study has shown are critical to effective empowerment using employment-focused models for homeless people with complex needs. The study also provides strong grounds for encouraging Kazakh policy makers to think carefully about how their employment approach works cross-dimensionally, in order to enhance the capabilities of homeless people across the full range of independently important, but inter-linked, empowerment domains.

This research further helps to demonstrate that constructive policy transfer is possible from the developed to the developing world, so long as researchers are mindful of potential pitfalls such as 'uninformed transfer', the 'scale of change' challenges, and the importance of transfer 'fit' and 'problem equivalence'. In this study these issues were addressed by: the sustained nature of the UK study, and the in-depth knowledge of the Kazakh context held by the author; the enhanced feasibility of the micro-scale policy transfer envisaged, impacting on a relatively small population subgroup; and indications of a sufficient 'problem equivalence' between the UK and Kazakhstan with respect to single homelessness, notwithstanding profound differences in the wider socio-economic context.

There are also a number of limitations of this study, some of which may provide a departure point for future research.

First, as with any qualitative research on small and non-random samples, the key limitation of the study lies in doubts over its generalisability (Robson, 1993). This standard limitation is countered in the current study to some extent by the small scale of the relevant 'sample universe' (i.e. employment-focussed SEs in the homelessness field in the UK) and the relatively high level of 'saturation' achieved in the primary research

undertaken, particularly in the first stage of the fieldwork when virtually all relevant organisations identified in England and Scotland were visited.

Second, in its review of existing policy-relevant and evaluative material, this study focused very tightly on the homelessness field, and did not venture much into the research evidence on other cognate groups who might also be the target of employment-based SEs (e.g. people with drug or alcohol problems, the long-term unemployed, etc.). The author felt that this was justified on the basis that the thesis was already covering a very great quantity of literature across the empowerment, capabilities, social enterprise, homelessness and international policy transfer fields. However, future researchers may wish to pursue analysis of the contrasts and continuities in the approach taken, and relative degree of success evident, in the use of the SE model with a variety of disadvantaged groups.

Third, the critical distinction between business-focused and socially-orientated SEs that shaped much of the thesis only became apparent during the course of the fieldwork and, as it turned out, the four case studies selected for in-depth evaluation included only one of the former and three of the latter. Future researchers might want to bear this in mind in planning their sampling strategies in order to ensure a more even representation of different SE approaches in this field.

Finally, this study focussed specifically on SEs in the homelessness field which sought to employ, or to provide training or work experience for, homeless people. Future research could usefully expand this focus to encompass an examination of different types of SEs (besides employment-focused ones) working with homeless people, and indeed other disadvantaged groups, in order to explore their empowerment potential with respect to enhancing the capabilities of vulnerable people with complex needs.

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